2 Pol. Pamph. vol 148.

# THE LETTERS OF AN ENGLISHMAN;

IN WHICH

THE PRINCIPLES, AND CONDUCT,

OF THE

ROCKINGHAM PARTY,

WHEN IN

ADMINISTRATION, AND OPPOSITION,

ARE FREELY, AND IMPARTIALLY DISPLAYED.

*Ne quid falsi audeat dicere, nec veri non audeat.*

*LONDON:*

PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

MDCCLXXXVI.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIX-PENCE.

G.R. III.
BRITISH MUSEUM

# PREFACE.

THE following Letters were originally printed in the Public Advertiſer. They have been mentioned in ſuch terms of approbation, by many very reſpectable, and impartial men, that the Author has been induced to re-print them in their preſent form, with a few additions. He is not ſolicitous to acquire reputation for the purity, or elegance of his ſtyle, but he has taken great pains to aſcertain the *truth* of the facts which he has advanced. To the leaders of that body of men, who are diſtinguiſhed by the name of the Rockingham Party, he is obliged for his materials. A Right Hon. Gentleman, the principal Panegyriſt of that party, ſtands high amongſt the preſent race of Pamphleteers; he has



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publiſhed his own Speeches, upon America, India, and an œconomical reform. Not truſting, however, to the induſtry, or the eloquence of an individual, the Rockingham party ſhewed an anxiety, during Lord North's adminiſtration, for a regular publication of our Parliamentary Debates, and they ſucceeded in effecting this favourite point.

It has been well obſerved, "* that no "hiſtory, or diſſertation on State affairs "of any kind whatever, is in any reſpect "ſo ſerviceable, as a view of our Parlia-"mentary tranſactions; eſpecially if di-"ligently collected, regularly digeſted, "and delivered with candour, and per-"ſpicuity; for by this means we examine "parties by their own light, adjuſt their "characters by their actions, not their pre-"tenſions, and enable ourſelves to form "a right judgment of the preſent, by the "paſt. Arguments appear with more

* Chandler's Commons' Debates, Vol. I. Page 1.

"force

" force in the mouths of the ſpeakers, than
" in the moſt lively narration. We be-
" come acquainted with the men, their mo-
" tives, prejudices, capacities, and vir-
" tues, as well as the ſubjects they can-
" vaſs."

It is more peculiarly fortunate in this age, that our Parliamentary Debates are ſo generally circulated, than it would have been at any former period; for at no time has political miſrepreſentation been ſo freely practiſed, as by the ſupporters of the preſent oppoſition. When Lord North was the Miniſter, he was ſeverely attacked by the Rockingham writers, and often very ably defended by miniſterial authors. As ſoon as the Coalition took place we were in a fair way of being overpowered, by the joint, and ingenious productions of men, who, following the example of their leaders, forgot their former animoſities, and on a ſudden were eager to prove, that Lord North, and Mr. Fox, muſt, and ought to be the ru-

lers of Great Britain. A few ſhort * extracts from the ſpeeches of certain Stateſmen, were brought to the public view, and had more effect upon the rational people of England, than the moſt finiſhed compoſitions could have produced.

In the courſe of the following Letters, the Author has endeavoured to prove the inconſiſtency of the Rockingham party, and to point out the dangerous principles which they profeſs. He has been enabled from undiſputed authorities, to ſtate their conſtant, and vehement abuſe of Lord North, for above twelve years; their junction with him, in order to force a miniſtry upon his Majeſty, which ſhocked, and diſguſted nine tenths of his ſubjects; their ſpecious promiſes as to Reform in the Public Expenditure, while they were in oppoſition; their ſubſequent failure to perform their promiſes, when the whole power of the State was in their hands; their ſtrenuous and ſucceſsful ſupport of Mr. Haſtings,

* Beauties of Fox, North, and Burke, printed by Stockdale.

when

when Lord North was his enemy; their efforts to remove him when the Britiſh empire was convulſed to its centre, and when India was the only quarter of the globe in which we were ſucceſsful; their ſupport of every officer who had been unfortunate in the courſe of the war, and their recall of our ſucceſsful Admiral, Lord Rodney; their open and avowed encouragement of an unnatural rebellion; their panegyricks upon the leading men in that rebellion, deſcribing them as the moſt meritorious characters of the age, and their Government, as the firſt Commonwealth in the world; and, to conclude, their preſent perſecution of an able and fortunate Stateſman, which ſhocks the common ſenſe of mankind, and has made us the ridicule and contempt of all Europe.

The Author has not preſumed to draw falſe concluſions from aſſumed facts; he would hold himſelf unworthy the name of an Engliſhman, were he capable of ſo baſe

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an act, as to extract any part of a ſpeech of Mr. Fox, or Mr. Burke, for the infamous purpoſe of miſleading his countrymen, by fixing a meaning to it, which the ſpeaker did not intend to convey. The world heard with aſtoniſhment, and indignation, that an attempt of this kind had been made by a perſon, who holds the rank of a Privy Counſellor of Great Britain, and they applauded the ſpirit with which an injured man, at the bar of the Houſe of Commons,* complained of the unfair, and illiberal conduct of his accuſer.

A charge of this nature, the Author has carefully endeavoured to avoid; he has not written from mean, nor mercenary motives: he has no obligations to any party; he has nothing to aſk, nor to expect from any miniſter; he loves his Country and his King, and glories in being

AN ENGLISHMAN.

* See Mr. Haſtings's Reply to Mr. Burke's fourteenth Charge, printed by Stockdale.

# THE LETTERS OF AN ENGLISHMAN.

## LETTER I.

I Cannot ſubſcribe to the truth of an aſſertion which I lately read in your paper, "that many miſchievous conſequences have "reſulted from the publication of parliamentary debates," though I am very ready to allow "that it is a great and ſerious grievance "that men, bankrupts in fortune and in fame, "and devoted to every ſpecies of profligacy "and diſſipation, ſhould be qualified to ſit in "parliament." I moſt ſincerely wiſh that the ſpirit, and not merely the letter of the law reſpecting qualifications, was attended to. It is ſurely repugnant to common-ſenſe, that a

man ſhould, *bona fide*, poſſeſs, free and unincumbered, three hundred pounds a year, to be enabled to take his ſeat, and, though not worth a ſhilling on the following day, be permitted to continue a member of the Britiſh Houſe of Commons.

It is a fact, Mr. Woodfall, which we all know, that qualifications have been given expreſsly for the hour, and then reſumed; but how, under ſuch circumſtances, a gentleman, and a man of honour, can take ſo ſolemn an oath as Mr. Hatſell adminiſters to every member, is beyond my comprehenſion.—If it is a real grievance, that men without fortunes may be in the Houſe of Commons, how infinitely more abſurd is it, that men, known to be worſe than nothing, ſhould be elected!——What would our anceſtors have thought of an execution in the houſe of a Member of Parliament? What would our anceſtors have thought, had the Houſe of Commons in their times been a ſanctuary, and protection to a man againſt the juſt claims o his creditors? Yet in modern days theſe events are too common, even to create ſurpriſe. But though I think that men of deſperate

perate and ruined fortunes, gamblers, and political adventurers, ought not to diſgrace this country, by ſitting amongſt its legiſlators; yet I moſt heartily approve of the publication of parliamentary debates; and I am well convinced, that the moſt beneficial effects have reſulted to the public from the ſpeeches of the members having been more generally read than the votes, ſince the year 1774. True it is, indeed, that patriotiſm has been reduced by this practice to a very low ebb; and perhaps the people in general do not look upon the proceedings in St. Stephen's Chapel *with quite ſo much reſpect, as they formerly did*; but, on the other hand, the King has recovered his proper ſhare of authority, and conſequence, as one of the three Eſtates; and it will never again be in the power of a few turbulent, factious, or deſigning men, to throw the kingdom in a flame.

By parliamentary uſage, it is diſorderly to allude, on one day, to what was ſaid in debate, upon another. Yet the warmeſt of Mr. Fox's friends has never attempted to deny, or even to explain away ſeveral of his expreſſions to

Lord North, ſuch as * " his having ſo deſpi-
" cable an opinion of his Lordſhip, that he
" would not truſt himſelf alone in a room
" with him, on a matter of buſineſs:" Again,
" Had the Houſe heard them (Narratives of
" the American war) impatiently? Miniſters
" muſt bear to hear them again, and on that
" day they muſt hear them; that was the day
" when the repreſentatives of the people muſt
" recall to the ears of his Majeſty's miniſters
" the diſgraceful and ruinous meaſures, that
" had brought us to this ſtate. They muſt
" hear them not only here, but, he truſted, that
" by the arouſed indignation and vengeance
" of an injured and undone people, *they muſt*
" *hear of them at the tribunal of juſtice, and*
" *expiate them on the public ſcaffold.*† It was his
" opinion that the day was now approaching
" —it was at hand, when the public would
" no longer ſubmit, nor the miniſtry eſcape:
" Their conduct was unprecedented in any
" age, or in any hiſtory: *It beggared the re-*

* See Parliamentary, 1775, 1781, and 1782.

† At this expreſſion, Mr. Debrett, in his Parliamentary Hiſtory, tells us, the Lord Advocate, Mr. Dundas, *ſmiled*——

" *cords*

" *cords of nations.*" And again, that " he " would conſent to be called the moſt infa- " mous of mankind, if he acted with any of " thoſe men who were inſtrumental in com- " mencing, or carrying on the American " war."—In one year, from the date of the laſt ſpeech, Mr. Fox ſat in the Cabinet with Lord North, and Lord Stormont!!!——

What wonders were promiſed us by Mr. Burke's reform bill! His ſpecious Declamation, when he opened the plan, was too precious to be truſted to the memory of a common reporter. Mr. Burke printed, and publiſhed the ſpeech himſelf. We were promiſed a ſaving of one million immediately, and a larger ſum hereafter, if his ſcheme was adopted in its full extent. It was at that time rejected. But when the Marquis of Rockingham came into adminiſtration in March 1782, *he had a carte blanche from the King as to reform*: and no man ventured to contradict Mr. Fox in the Houſe of Commons. What became of Mr. Burke's million? The retrenchments were ſtated at no more than ſeventy-two thouſand pounds; of which ſum it was impracticable to ſave more than one half, even with every

exertion of Mr. Gilbert. To conclude the account of this deluſion, upon the ſubject of reform, I ſhall merely obſerve, that Mr. Pitt, who certainly is an œconomical miniſter, found it impoſſible to pay off the debt incurred by the civil liſt during *Lord North's adminiſtration*; and Parliament has at laſt taken that debt upon itſelf.

I ſhould ſwell the preſent letter to an improper length, were I to point out to you the various inſtances in which the publication of parliamentary debates has enabled the good people of England to diſcover the wide difference between profeſſion and performance, between theory and practice: but theſe inſtances ſhall, with your leave, be the ſubject of my future letters.

## LETTER II.

I Have felt, in common with all his Majeſty's loyal ſubjects, the ſtrongeſt ſentiments of horror and indignation at the late attempt upon the valuable life of our Sovereign, even though the attempt was made by a mad woman, and with an inſtrument which the writers of Oppoſition tell us *was blunt at the point.**—I have alſo felt, in common with every man who has the welfare, or even the exiſtence, of his country at heart, the ſincereſt joy that his Majeſty has eſcaped unhurt from ſo diabolical an attempt.

I own, Mr. Woodfall, that I ſaw with great pleaſure a crowd of *new faces* at St. James's, to congratulate his Majeſty upon ſo happy an eſcape, from ſuch imminent dan-

* The loyal feelings of his Majeſty's ſubjects were too ſtrong to be ſported with for ſome days; but latterly the avowed ſupporters of oppoſition have employed their wit, both in poetry and proſe, to throw an air of ridicule upon an act, which might have ruined the nation.

ger.—

ger.—Although I think the preſent Oppoſition to be generally compoſed of the moſt unprincipled, deſperate, and dangerous men, that ever infeſted this, or any country—of men who have no viſible means of paying for a dinner —of ſwindlers, ſharpers, and gamblers—yet there are ſome men connected with them, who are poſſeſſed of many private virtues. The Dukes of Portland, and Devonſhire, Earl Fitzwilliam, and Lord John Cavendiſh, are, I believe, in private life, as amiable and praiſeworthy characters as this country has at any time produced; but as public men, we ſhall long have cauſe to regret, that they were born to ſo elevated a rank in ſociety. Was there a violence to which the faction, nominally guided by thoſe Noble Lords, did not proceed, during the progreſs of the late calamitous war? I do not quote Lord North as an authority upon all occaſions; but were his Lordſhip to be aſked, "Who taught America "to rebel?" He muſt anſwer, becauſe he has already ſaid it, "My friends, the Whig "Party of the Coalition." * "Who gave in- "dependence to America?"—"The ſame

* See Parliamentary Debates from 1775 to 1782.

"men."

" men." " Who kept the city of London in " wild uproar and confuſion for three days " and three nights, and procured a vote of " thanks to Lord Keppel from both Houſes " of Parliament for a ſuppoſed victory?"— " The ſame men." " Who pledged himſelf " to his country to impeach Lord North for " his miſmanagement?"—" The political de- " pendant of the ſame men." " Who cauſed " the recall of the moſt, and almoſt the only, " ſucceſsful naval commander during the late " unfortunate war, in the moment of victo- " ry?"—" The political dependant of the ſame " men." " By whom were the moſt ſtrenu- " ous exertions made, to recall the man from " India, who preſerved whole, entire, and un- " impaired, the extenſive empire committed to " his charge, in ſpite of all the obſtacles which " this infatuated country threw in his way?" —" By the Rockingham faction, at the inſti- " gation of their political dependant." " By " whom is the man who has done ſo much to " ſerve his country, proſecuted at the preſent " moment, with a degree of virulence, and " inveteracy, that will entail infamy upon " the parties concerned in it to the lateſt ages?" —" By the Rockingham faction, at the inſti-

"gation of their political dependant." I challenge the warmeſt friend of the preſent Oppoſition, to deny an aſſertion that I have advanced, or to diſprove what I further aſſert; that the ſame party which loſt us America, is at this moment aſſiſting the views of France upon India.—Whence, Mr. Woodfall, does all this miſchief originate?—From the following ſource:—The Rockingham party, as it is called, have been told that they have an hereditary right to govern this country; that though his Majeſty may be the Monarch, that party ought to lead, or to muzzle him. ——Have I ſtated this too ſtrongly?—Surely not.—Let thoſe who doubt it, read Mr. Burke's "Thoughts on the preſent Diſcon-"tents," printed in 1770.*—Let them ſeriouſly conſider what he ſays of a "govern-"ment of connection," in oppoſition to the true, and conſtitutional power of the crown —Let them reflect upon the events that have occurred from 1770 to the preſent time, and

* The dangerous principles which are advanced in this celebrated pamphlet, were moſt admirably and ſucceſsfully expoſed by Lord Abingdon, in the debate upon Mr. Fox's India bill, in the Houſe of Lords. He called it the creed of the Rockingham Party.

they

they will then ſee, that the temporary ruin of this country is owing to a ſyſtematic attempt to introduce what Mr. Burke calls a "Government of Connection."—From 1770 to 1782, the Rockingham party oppoſed every meaſure, and every man patronized by Lord North; and every individual whom he attacked, they attempted to protect. What will the world ſay when I tell them (and the books at the India houſe will prove the truth of my aſſertion) that in the year 1776, when by Lord North's influence with thirteen Directors, he procured the removal of Mr. Haſtings, *for the Rohilla war*, the Marquis of Rockingham, and all his friends, who were Proprietors of Eaſt-India Stock, actually went in a body to the India-houſe, and voted for his continuance; in which vote, fortunately for the Britiſh empire in India, they were ſucceſsful. Compare this conduct with the proceedings of the ſame party upon *the ſame Rohilla war ten years after!!!*

After ſtruggling againſt Lord North for twelve years, and convulſing the Britiſh empire to its centre, the Marquis of Rockingham's party ſucceeded, and in the month of

March, 1782, "the Government of Connection," took place in its fulleſt extent. They were enabled to turn out Lord North, by aſſerting what was not true, that they could make peace with America. This confident aſſertion, and their ſubſequent failure, were noticed by Lord Stormont the following year.*—The King was, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the word, at that time, a priſoner at St. James's, and the faction poſſeſſed the fulleſt confidence of the Houſe of Commons—yet poſterity will pronounce, that there never was ſo weak or wretched a government, as the Rockingham Miniſtry of 1782.—I believe, when in office, their public acts were, Recalling Lord Rodney, for taking three Admirals and ſixteen ſail of the line from our enemies, on a ridiculous tale of ſtealing a pair of breeches from a Dutch Jew; paſſing a vote for recalling Mr. Haſtings from Bengal in the moſt arduous and critical moment of the late war—fruitleſsly ſoliciting a peace from Holland and America in the moſt mean and abject terms; paſſing a reform bill which was to have ſaved a million annually, though it did not in fact ſave thirty thouſand pounds—and laſtly, depriving a great number of their fellow ſub-

* See Parliamentary Debates, December 5, 1782.

jects

jects of their birth-right, the right of voting for members of Parliament. Theſe are the acts of the Rockingham Miniſtry; and yet, till the men who compoſed it, loſt their credit with the nation, by their coalition with Lord North, ſuch deſtructive acts as theſe were not only defended, but the ſubject of panegyric.

The "Government of Connection," as Mr. Burke called it, was in truth moſt inefficient. The cabinet was divided and in confuſion, from one month after its formation, till the 1ſt of July, 1782, when by the death of the Marquis of Rockingham it was totally diſſolved. It has been the faſhion for all parties to ſpeak well of the Marquis of Rockingham, *ſince his deceaſe.* As a private man, I believe he was reſpectable; but in his public character, he was ſurely the cauſe of infinite miſchief to his country; nor did he himſelf enjoy one moment of eaſe, or ſatisfaction. When he became a miniſter in 1765, it was, as we all know, by accident,—owing to the refuſal, the unexpected refuſal of Lord Chatham, at that moment. He continued one year only in office, and paſſed the fatal Declaratory act.—He was then ſixteen years in oppoſition,

ſition, the nominal head of that body. Born to a fortune more than equal to the rational expences of any man, his party connections, in oppoſition to the Crown, involved him in continual difficulties. Many political men, aliens in Great Britain, and without an acre of land in any country, or a ſhilling in any fund, owed their ſupport to his bounty. The drains of this kind, to which the Marquis had voluntarily ſubjected himſelf, were more than any fortune could ſupport; and he was perpetually involved in pecuniary difficulties. His debts, at the time of his deceaſe, were ſaid to be near three hundred thouſand pounds:*—and yet I never heard that the Marquis's charity extended beyond the ſupport of needy political adventurers, for the purpoſe of keeping up an intereſt, uſeful perhaps to a party, but deſtructive to himſelf, and the State.

In my next letter I ſhall offer a few remarks upon the conduct of the Rocking-

* A noble earl, it is generally ſaid, has at this moment a mortgage, of one hundred and eighty thouſand pounds, on the Rockingham eſtates.

ham Faction, after the death of their leader: and I hope to prove to you, in oppoſition to Mr. Burke's doctrine of "Connections," that the King is, and ought ever to be, the true conſtitutional head of this free government.

## LETTER III.

HAVING obſerved in my former letter, that upon the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, Mr. Burke's "Go-"vernment of Connection" was diſſolved, I ſhall proceed with the hiſtory of that faction to the preſent time. However we may blame Lord North for many of his acts, yet we muſt allow that the moſt ſtrenuous exertions were made during his adminiſtration, to counteract the ambitious views of the moſt formidable combination of foes, that were ever formed againſt this, or any country. Had his Lordſhip been leſs lenient to the abettors of rebellion at home, or had he not been too indulgent to thoſe officers who failed in the execution of their duty, we might ſtill have preſerved America to Great Britain. Would poſterity believe, if the debates in Parliament were not publiſhed, that a member of a Britiſh Houſe of Commons ſhould preſume ſo far upon the imbecility of government, as to acknowledge in his place, that he had written to, and received a letter from Doctor Franklin, then declared

declared by law, a rebel to his King and country, in an affair of State, the exchange of a Britiſh General?

But the conduct of Lord North, upon his removal from office, and during the ſummer of 1782, was to the higheſt degree laudable, and worthy of imitation. His party in the Houſe of Commons was ſtrong and formidable, yet in no one inſtance did he ſeek to embarraſs or to diſtreſs his ſucceſſors in office. Even upon the memorable 9th of July, 1782, when the breach amongſt the patriotic Miniſters appeared irreparable, he left them to ſettle their ſquabbles amongſt themſelves. He was ſilent too when Mr. Fox declared, that Lord Shelburne would have recourſe to the late Miniſter, Lord North, and invite him to office, *but that the nation would not bear it.** Happy, indeed, would it have been for Lord North, had he perſiſted in the laudable neutrality, which he adopted in the ſummer of 1782.

During the Adminiſtration of the Marquis of Landſdown, Gibraltar was relieved, and a peace concluded, which has ſaved England.

* See Parliamentary Debates, 1782.

It remains to be proved that his Lordſhip could have made a better peace—if he could, he deſerves the execrations of his countrymen, and exemplary puniſhment; but every rational man approved in January, 1783, of Mr. Fox's ſentiments in April, 1782, "that peace "upon any terms was neceſſary for Great Bri-"tain." The Houſe of Commons was not however the beſt of all poſſible places for a Miniſter to utter ſuch a ſentiment in, at the time he was aſking for peace.

On the meeting of Parliament, in December, 1782, it appeared perfectly clear that the Rockingham party was too weak to ſeize the government of this country—a misfortune which the writer of Mr. Fox's Life very feelingly laments.—What was to be done? Much as the party hated Lord North, they deteſted Lord Shelburne ſtill more—and it was determined to try in December, 1782, that which Mr. Fox, the preceding July, had declared, and truly, as he has ſince found, "*the nation would not bear.*"—It is generally ſaid that the credit of forming the Coalition is juſtly due to Mr. William Eden.—Be that as it may, the junction of parties, ſo totally oppoſite in every thing, excited univerſal ſurpriſe and indignation.

tion. The few ſceptics that remained in this nation, now exclaimed to a man, what is patriotiſm but a name ! ! !—Here however the doctrine of " Connection," as laid down by Mr. Burke, was carried moſt literally into practice. The Rockingham party was weak in the Houſe of Commons—What ſo natural, therefore, as calling to their aid the forces of a man whom they had been abuſing moſt unmercifully for ten long years? I hope Mr. Eden, or ſome other gentleman, will, on a future day, give us a hiſtory of the Coalition—Difficulties, as was natural, occurred in its formation.—Mr. Fox muſt at firſt have looked rather ſhy upon a man, of whom his opinion was ſo bad, that he would not truſt himſelf alone in a room with him—but theſe were in time ſurmounted.—One Noble Lord of that adminiſtration acted throughout the negociation with the ſtricteſt firmneſs and honour; I mean Lord Stormont—His excluſion from the Cabinet, was a point at one time inſiſted upon by the Whig part of the Coalition—but from this they receded; and I have ſince received much pleaſure in hearing Mr. Fox do juſtice to the merits and abilities of Lord Stormont.*—The



* See Mr. Fox's character of Lord Stormont in 1782, when

Preliminaries being ſettled among the parties, the next point was to procure his Majeſty's conſent.—The King ſtood a ſiege of ſix weeks, and at laſt was taken priſoner by a "Government "of Connection."—A Miniſtry thus formed, who had ſeized upon the government of the kingdom, againſt the ſenſe of the King and his people, were at firſt naturally unwilling to do any thing that ſhould unneceſſarily provoke or irritate their fellow-ſubjects.—The taxes therefore of the year 1783, were merely ſufficient to meet the ſupplies of that year. No notice was taken of the unfunded debt, nor of the deficiencies of Lord North's taxes, though both had formerly been ſubjects of violent complaint from Mr. Fox.—Had the nation known its true ſituation at that time, the Coalition would have been ſtill more unpopular, if poſſible, than it was.—The ill-timed zeal of an individual to ſerve two friends of the late Lord Holland, Meſſrs. Powell and Bembridge, did infinite miſchief to the party; and I believe no men were more ſenſible of the folly of the act, than Mr. Fox and Mr. Powell themſelves. This was followed by a declaration from the Miniſtry, that they had

when Lord Stormont was Secretary of State, and compare it with his character of the ſame Noble Lord in 1785.

intended

intended to ſettle on the Prince of Wales one hundred thouſand pounds a year, but were prevented by his Majeſty.—We have not forgot the feelings and ſenſe of the nation upon this tranſaction. During the ſummer of 1783 the "Government of Connection" clearly perceived that they were unpopular abroad, and ſtood on very ſlippery ground at St. James's. All their attempts to induce the King to create a Peer were in vain; though, it is ſaid, the name of Mr. Welbore Ellis was at the head of a liſt of eighteen gentlemen, to whom they had promiſed the dignity of the Peerage.—

The Britiſh Government, however, remained entire in one quarter of the globe, where it had withſtood the mightieſt efforts of our numerous enemies. In the courſe of a long and arduous war in India, a debt was contracted not equal to one of Lord North's unfortunate war loans; and our conqueſts in Aſia enabled Lord Shelburne to conclude a much better peace than he could otherwiſe have done. By the coalition, an act of indemnity was paſſed for all the blunders, miſfortunes, and diſgrace, that we had ſuffered in Europe, America, and Africa, whether from miſtakes

miſtakes in the cabinet or the field; and miniſterial vengeance was to be levelled againſt that body of men, and their ſervants who had ſupported the Britiſh character in the Eaſt. A revenue of ſix millions ſterling and upwards in India, the management of a commerce in Europe, amounting to five millions annually, and the various appointments dependant upon both, were indeed objects very deſirable to be attained by a "Government "of Connection."—One member of that adminiſtration, Lord Stormont, had the ſagacity to ſee the miſchievous tendency of his colleague's plan, and the virtue to oppoſe it; but his oppoſition was fruitleſs; and Mr. Fox's India bill, as it is called, was produced, and fairly canvaſſed by a diſcerning public. All the miſrepreſentations of a determined party were in vain: though the bill paſſed through the Houſe of Commons by a prodigious majority, yet the eyes of the nation were opened, and ſaw with horror and indignation a combination of men, who had reduced the country to the greateſt diſtreſs, now libelling thoſe whoſe merits were as conſpicuous as the miſconduct of their perſecutors. The bill was loſt; and with it fell Mr. Burke's "Govern- "ment of Connection."

## LETTER IV.

MR. Burke's "Government of Connec-
"tion," having been diſmiſſed from his Majeſty's ſervice on the 19th of December, 1783, I propoſe now to conſider their conduct as a party from that day to the preſent hour.—It is time the nonſenſical names of Whig and Tory were at an end.—The late Miniſtry was variouſly denominated—by ſome it was called the Portland; by others Mr. Fox's; by a few the Coalition; by many the Whig; by many the Tory; and the people in general gave it the proper name of the Whig and Tory Adminiſtration. If one of the Secretaries of State was a reputed Whig, his colleague had been called a Tory, for the laſt ten years.—If the Firſt Lord of the Treaſury was the great grandſon of a Dutchman, and by deſcent a Whig, the Lord Preſident of the Council was the nephew of Lord Mansfield —and the* Firſt Commiſſioner of the Great Seal had

* In 1781 Mr. Fox obſerved, that "a learned Member "of the Houſe of Commons, was exalted to the dignity "of

had for years ſupported powerfully and ſtrenuouſly what Mr. Fox's friends had called the Tory Adminiſtration of Lord North.—The departments at St. James's were promiſcuouſly filled by the Whig and Tory friends of both parties, and the Under Miniſters, or the *efficient men*, as they were generally called, who by their violence brought deſtruction upon their principles, were Iriſhmen—The Pay-Maſter General, to whom they owed their India Bill, and their fall, was an Iriſhman—the two Secretaries of the Treaſury were Iriſhmen—the private Secretary to the Firſt Lord was an Iriſhman, and had been a Roman Catholic Prieſt—the Secretary at war was an Iriſhman—theſe were all of the Rockingham or Whig ſelection; and thoſe out of doors, who defended them in pamphlets, and periodical publications, were Iriſhmen.—To ſpeak of the late Adminiſtration collectively, I believe I may venture to ſay, that they were the moſt diſtreſſed and diſſipated body of men that had

" of a Peer, and enrolled among the hereditary Council " of the Realm: He meant Lord Loughborough. He " was thus rewarded for no other merit that he could ever " diſcover, but that of vehemently abuſing our fellow ſub- " jects in America, and calling their oppoſition the war of " Hancock and his crew."

directed

directed the affairs of this country, from the Revolution to the preſent day.—Thoſe amongſt them, (with one or two exceptions) who inherited large eſtates from their anceſtors, were involved in pecuniary difficulties, either contracted at a gaming-table, or from having indulged the ſilly ambition of heading a party in oppoſition to the Crown.—No wonder, therefore, that the loſs of office was to ſuch men a moſt ſerious conſideration, and that they ſhould have ſtruggled hard to regain it. —For three months the diſcarded Miniſters, being in poſſeſſion of a majority of the Houſe of Commons, were oppoſed to the ſenſe of the King, the Houſe of Lords, and the great body of the people of England.—They proceeded from one degree of violence to another; but, foiled in all, and failing in the negociation for an union with the preſent Miniſters, his Majeſty was enabled to diſſolve a Parliament that had for months obſtructed the buſineſs of the nation; and, to uſe the Lord Chancellor's expreſſion, "would have "made the Crown unworthy for a man of "honour to wear."———

The moment is now arrived, and perhaps it

could not have been done at an earlier period, when the merits of that bill upon which the late Adminiſtration were diſmiſſed, can be fairly and diſpaſſionately conſidered. Its effects upon public credit were at the time moſt alarming. In its preamble it ſtated that the affairs of the Company had been groſsly miſmanaged, and *would fall into utter ruin*, if a fit remedy were not immediately applied. Yet the firſt operation of the propoſed remedy was, to ſink the Company's ſtock from 142 to 115. Near three years have now elapſed ſince Mr. Fox opened his bold ſcheme in the Houſe of Commons; and I appeal to the good ſenſe of the people of England, who read his ſpeeches, and the oratorical flouriſhes of Mr. Burke at that period, and who may have an opportunity of reading both again now (for they have been faithfully publiſhed) to determine what degree of truth there was in their repreſentations. *Did a ſingle event happen in India, which they predicted as inevitable, without an entire change of men and meaſures?* Were provinces wreſted from us in India during the war, or was the national intereſt or honour ſacrificed by a peace in India? So far are we in fact from having experienced that *utter ruin*,

*ruin*, which the rejection of their *fit and becoming remedy* was to produce, that the ſtock, which in December 1783 was at 115, is in Auguſt 1786 at 171.

Poſterity will do that juſtice to the exertions of our fellow ſubjects who preſerved India, which the tools of faction, and ſome of the venal writers of the preſent age have denied them. Yet permit me in this place to reſcue, as far as I can, the character of one gallant officer from that obloquy which the editors of the two Annual Regiſters have attempted to caſt upon it. The officer, whoſe fame has been ſo infamouſly aſperſed, is the late Colonel John Campbell, of the forty-ſecond regiment of foot. His conduct, and that of the gallant army under his command, have moſt unjuſtly and falſely been compared to that of Cortez and Pizarro in South America; ſince in truth not a ſingle inſtance of cruelty has or can be laid to his charge;* and it is a fact of public notoriety, that in no quarter of the

* An officer of rank in her Majeſty's ſervice has refuted the falſehoods inſerted in the Annual Regiſters—in the Political Magazine—Printed by Murray.

globe, at no period of time, has war been carried on with ſo much humanity as by the Engliſh in India. To the juſtice and generoſity of a Britiſh officer, who ſurvived his friend Colonel Campbell, every man of ſpirit and feeling is greatly indebted. He has publiſhed a journal of the ſiege of Mangalore; by which it appears, that by a perſeverance and ſpirit unexampled during the late war, *except in India*, Colonel Campbell, with a garriſon not exceeding five-hundred Europeans and twelve hundred Sepoys, held the fort of Mangalore againſt Tippoo Sultain's whole army, conſiſting of above one hundred thouſand men, and aſſiſted by a body of French regulars almoſt equal to the whole force of Colonel Campbell's garriſon.—I ſhall be pardoned for this digreſſion in this place by thoſe who recollect that a general and indiſcriminate abuſe of all men of all deſcriptions who were ſerving their country in India (with the ſingle exception of Lord Macartney), was one of the artifices practiſed to miſlead the public, while the celebrated bill, to which I have alluded, was under conſideration.

We can all remember how violent the current

was againſt the late adminiſtration, upon the diſſolution of Parliament; nor was the ſenſe of the people evinced more ſtrongly at any time, than by the event of the new elections. —Mr. Pitt had the advantage of a full, fair, independent, and honourable ſupport; and in his firſt great meaſure, his India bill, there was a moſt curious change of opinions.

One of the clauſes of that bill which compelled men returning from India after the 1ſt of January, 1787, to declare the amount of their fortunes, has been very generally and very juſtly condemned even by Mr. Pitt's beſt friends; and the men who propoſed that it ſhould be enacted, have had the good ſenſe to vote for its repeal. But ſhall I allow the late miniſters any credit for their violent oppoſition to it? Certainly not, ſince the clauſe, in fact, originated in their repeated miſrepreſentations. How has Mr. Burke deſcribed the ſervants of the Eaſt-India Company in his printed ſpeech of the 1ſt of December, 1783? ——He ſays, "they are a ſucceſſion of birds "of prey, with appetites continually increaſ- "ing for a food that is continually waſting; "and that, if they were to be driven out of

"India

" India to-morrow, nothing would remain to " tell that it had been poſſeſſed during the in- " glorious period of our dominion, by any " thing better than the Ouran Outang, or the " Tyger."——And in his regulating or reme- dial bill, as he called it, there was a clauſe to preclude any perſon who had ſerved his coun- try in India, from obtaining a ſeat in the Houſe of Commons—an infringement upon the birthright of an Engliſhman as ſevere and unmerited as that which was enacted by Mr. Pitt's bill; and which, the ſeaſon of deluſion being paſt, the good ſenſe of the Legiſlature has repealed.

If any partizan of oppoſition ſhall aſſert, that it is a principle with them to cenſure and to puniſh delinquents only, and not to con- found the innocent with the guilty, I deſire to refer him to their ſpeeches at the time they were miniſters, and he will find that all parts of the Company's government, both at home and abroad, were involved in their cenſures, and adjudged worthy of puniſhments.——Direc- tors, proprietors, and their civil and military ſervants in India, were all to ſuffer by Mr. Fox's bill; and Mr. Burke, who is famous for

for ſtarting new ideas, and working them up with infinite ingenuity, confidently aſſerted that the great body of Eaſt-India Proprietors were the agents, and ſervants, of the ſervants in India. It was with peculiar conſiſtency that men who had involved this nation in a debt of above one hundred millions, ſpoke of the enormous eſtabliſhments in India; that thoſe who had juſtified the uſe of the tomahawk and ſcalping-knife in America, ſhould talk in general terms of the cruelty of the Company's government in India, without producing a ſingle inſtance to ſupport the ſlander; or that thoſe who gave away profitable loans and contracts, advantageous infinitely beyond the example of former times, ſhould declaim on the corrupt government of Bengal—yet there was not an abſurdity of this kind which ſome of that late adminiſtration, confident in coalition numbers, did not run into.

## LETTER V.

I HAVE curſorily mentioned in my laſt letter the oppoſition which Mr. Pitt's India Bill met with in the firſt Seſſion of Parliament.—In every inſtance that I review the conduct of the late Miniſtry, I have reaſon to applaud the patriotiſm of thoſe men who have enabled the people of England to judge with accuracy of public men and public meaſures, by authoriſing ſo general a circulation of the Parliamentary Debates.—On the firſt meeting of the preſent Parliament, the unfunded debt of this country amounted to the immenſe ſum of thirty-ſix millions ſterling; the deficiencies of the taxes which were impoſed during the late unfortunate war, for the intereſt of the annual loans, amounted alſo to a ſum exceeding five hundred thouſand pounds.—There was a time when Mr. Fox attacked Lord North with the utmoſt ſeverity, for leaving his ſucceſſors ſuch a tremendous account to ſettle; and there was a time too when he declared, that bad as he had deemed the ſituation of this country before he came into office, he found it,

it, upon examination ſince, infinitely worſe than even he had conceived it to be.—The firſt declaration was made by Mr. Fox early in March, 1782, when Lord North moved his taxes as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the laſt, in the virtuous days of the Marquis of Rockingham, when Mr. Fox was a Miniſter.

The ſtate of the nation, if known, was not fairly conſidered in the year 1782, and in the following year the plan at the beginning of it for turning out Lord Shelburne, and at the cloſe for carrying Mr. Fox's India Bill, prevented the adoption of any public meaſure for the relief of our finances, except the eſtabliſhment of a Committee to conſider of the alarming growth of ſmuggling; and that Committee, I am very ready to confeſs, did infinite ſervice to this country by its report.

From the obſtructions which I have mentioned, it actually happened, that the true ſtate of our finances was never fully conſidered from the third year of the late war, until the firſt year of the preſent Parliament—and dreadful and alarming indeed did they appear upon a thorough examination.—After all the burthens impoſed upon the inhabitants of

this Iſland, it became neceſſary for Mr. Pitt to propoſe new and efficient taxes, to the amount of nearly a million ſterling.—What popularity could withſtand the performance of this indiſpenſible duty?

In the courſe of the laſt year of Lord North's unfortunate adminiſtration, Mr. Burke told us, that the ſources of taxation had been exhauſted by the Noble Lord; that we were taxed if we eat, drank, walked, rode, waked, or ſlept; that in the courſe of the war we were debtors by the loſs of thirteen Provinces in America, half our Weſt-India Iſlands, our African ſettlements, and Minorca—(he might in truth and juſtice have added, *in India alone ſucceſsful*)—that we were debtors alſo by adding one hundred millions, at the leaſt, to our national debt—when this account, therefore, came to be finally cloſed, it ſtruck us all, as well indeed it might, with horror and alarm; and Mr. Dempſter with peculiar propriety obſerved, that though Mr. Pitt had the misfortune to lay before the public their real ſituation, and to impoſe ſo many additional and heavy burthens upon them, yet he had one conſolation which few public men, or amongſt thoſe who had been public men, could boaſt—he

was

was not a participator in thoſe meaſures which had brought this country into its calamitous ſtate—and it is this reflection alone, operating upon the minds of the great body of the people of England, that has enabled the Miniſter to withſtand that torrent of obloquy and abuſe to which his taxes have ſubjected him.

That his taxes have been very heavy, vexatious, and oppreſſive, we are all ready to allow; for every man of property in Great Britain feels them ſeverely; yet the ſtrenuous oppoſition with which almoſt every meaſure of finance has been received from one party in the Houſe of Commons, will give the public but a poor idea of their patriotiſm—and if we refer to thoſe out of doors, who are the open and avowed ſupporters of the party I allude to, we ſhall find that every engine has been reſorted to, to excite diſcontent, and ſow ſedition amongſt the people. If the fact is true which Mr. Burke ſtated in February 1782, "that the ſources of taxation were exhauſted;" if, as Mr. Fox, the following year, when a Miniſter, told us, "new and heavy burthens "muſt be laid upon the people—that taxes, "if they were efficient, muſt be ſeverely felt;"

I am at a loſs to conceive how Mr. Pitt could have acted otherwiſe than he has done—and the prodigious riſe in the public funds, the increaſed value of land, and the flouriſhing ſtate of the credit of Great Britain throughout the world, will prove to us that, if our burthens are heavy, we are ſtill a great and reſpected nation.

I ſhall leave another ſubject of long and violent diſcuſſion to thoſe who are more maſters of it than I can pretend to be. I mean the Iriſh Propoſitions; and with reſpect to the fortifications, I deem it fortunate for the nation, that the ſcheme failed. My deſign being principally to examine the conduct of that body of men which was diſtinguiſhed by the name of the Rockingham Party at one time, and the Coalition at another, I ſhall proceed now to detail how that party has acted towards the Eaſt-India Company, their ſervants, and more particularly the late Governor General of Bengal.

In the firſt ſeſſion of this Parliament, ſome of the topics that had been agitated previous to the diſſolution, were repeated, though more faintly

faintly than before. The party acquired the aſſiſtance of Mr. Francis, who had been ſent out by Lord North, a Member of the Council General in 1774, and continued in India till the latter end of 1780. This gentleman opened his parliamentary career on the 2nd of July,* 1784, by declaring, with great ſolemnity, that he bore no malice nor ill-will to Mr. Haſtings; and that Mr. Haſtings, he was confident, bore none to him: both being men of tempers too warm to retain reſentment. He bore teſtimony to the great abilities of Mr. Haſtings; but deſcribed him as a man of a warm imagination, who wrote *currente calamo*.

Mr. Francis, in the ſame ſpeech, aſſured the Houſe of Commons, that "we had no "proſpect of peace in India," in oppoſition to the aſſurances that Mr. Haſtings had given the Directors, of its ſpeedily taking place. It happened unfortunately for the credit of Mr. Francis's predictions, that peace had been concluded in India three months before he had pronounced it not to be in proſpect; and

* See Mr. Francis's Speech, printed by Debrett.

advice

advice of it was received here when Mr. Francis's ſpeech was warm from the preſs.

The debates upon the ſtate of the Company's finances during the ſeſſion of 1784, were long and vehement; their debts abroad pronounced irrecoverable, and their bankruptcy in England repeatedly predicted.—The Faction no longer talked of rum contracts, contracts for ſour-crout, improvident loans, unfortunate expeditions, or large balances in the hands of public accountants. All the blunders (if blunders there were) of a late miniſter, all inquiries into the waſte of public money, or into national misfortunes, all œconomical reforms in Great Britain, and all threatened impeachments, were abandoned. "In India had the national honour been for-"feited, and the national wealth expended." At the cloſe of the ſeſſion of 1784 theſe were the repreſentations of the Rockingham party, and ſuch their weight in the city, that the more gloomy they were, the higher aroſe the credit of the Eaſt-India Company.

This year and the laſt have been ſo fruitful of events, that I ſhall reſerve a full and particu-

particular detail of them to my future letters; assuring you, Mr. Woodfall, that I shall hazard no opinions nor conjectures of my own, but confine myself either to the relation of such facts as are publicly known, or as I can fully authenticate.

## LETTER VI.

AT the opening of the ſecond ſeſſion of this Parliament, in the month of January, 1785, the attention of the Rockingham party was chiefly employed in inveſtigating the affairs of the Eaſt-India Company. From the cloſe of the late to the commencement of this ſeſſion, ſucceſſive advices had been received from India, which tended moſt fully to prove the fallacy of thoſe predictions which the party had hazarded during the progreſs of Mr. Fox's bill in the late Houſe of Commons. Mr. Haſtings, therefore, was neglected for a time, and the parliamentary campaign commenced by an attack upon the Board of Control, whoſe determination upon the debts of the Nabob of Arcot was a ſubject of ſtrict and curious inveſtigation.—While ſo great a balance was due from the Nabob to the Company, and from the Company to the public, there was a degree of injuſtice in appropriating ſo large a proportion of the revenues of the Carnatic for the liquidation of the debts of individuals. The Party in this inſtance had

an opportunity of quoting the authority of Mr. Haſtings, who had never been an advocate for thoſe debts. In the diſcuſſion of this ſubject, Mr. Burke had an opportunity of circulating opinions almoſt as wild as thoſe which he has entertained relative to Mr. Haſtings. He made a ſpeech, which he has ſince very correctly, and carefully printed, and publiſhed. In one part of it he has ſaid, that the late Mr. Atkinſon, and Mr. Paul Benfield (who is now on his paſſage to England) were very deeply concerned in the fabrication of Members for the preſent Parliament; that Mr. Dundas was privy to the plan; and that in return for their parliamentary ſupport, he had formed an arrangement relative to the Nabob's debts, by which Mr. Benfield would be amply repaid for his ſervice at the General Election. Time was when ſuch injurious, and ſpeculative opinions would have had their weight even in this enlightened country: But can any man, *after what has happened*, be ſo credulous as to ſuppoſe that Mr. Paul Benfield could poſſibly have known of the diſſolution until five months at the leaſt after it happened, or that he could have had any concern,

directly or indirectly, in the late elections? A fooliſh ambition to render himſelf of conſequence to Lord North, had involved Mr. Benfield in great difficulties before he quitted England in 1781; and ſince that period he has been a nominal paymaſter of a nominal garriſon on the rock of Permacoil in the Carnatic.

In the month of June, 1785, Mr. Haſtings arrived in England. The proſecution of this gentleman has been the principal object of the Rockingham party from the month of April, 1782. It is impoſſible for me, therefore, to proceed fully and impartially in an examination of the conduct of the party, without taking a ſhort review of the leading features of the character, and government of Mr. Haſtings. Much indeed has been ſaid and written relative to this extraordinary man. A moderate and impartial ſpectator, totally unintereſted in the event of the preſent perſecution, can therefore be at no loſs for materials which convey complete information upon almoſt every conteſted point in his whole conduct. Lord North may have been a very good miniſter, Lord Keppel a very experienced admiral,

admiral, and General Burgoyne a very accompliſhed commander—yet, without examination into their ſeveral merits, we naturally believe the contrary, becauſe they have all been unfortunate. Mr. Haſtings, on the other hand, may not deſerve that high character which he bears throughout Europe and Aſia; but until proofs of his demerits are offered, an impartial man muſt warmly applaud his conduct, becauſe to take the accuſations of his enemies as proofs, they amount merely to this, that though he has ſaved India, he has not done it preciſely in the way the Rockingham party approve.

I find from a book which has always been quoted as of undoubted authority, Doctor Naſh's Antiquities of Worceſterſhire, that Mr. Haſtings is deſcended from one of the moſt ancient, and reſpectable families in that county. The Doctor affirms, that the Earls of Huntingdon derive their deſcent from a younger branch of it. He adds, that the family poſſeſſed very conſiderable eſtates in the adjoining counties of Glouceſter and Oxford—that ſome of theſe were ſold in the reign of Charles the Firſt, for the ſervice of that un-

fortunate Monarch, and that four manors were made over to Mr. Lenthall, Speaker of the Houſe of Commons, in order to preſerve Dailsford, in Worceſterſhire, which had been in the family of Haſtings, together with the patronage of the living, from the year 1280. This eſtate was ſold by the grandfather of Mr. Haſtings in 1715, and a ſmall part of it he has lately repurchaſed. I am well aware that theſe circumſtances may appear exceedingly trivial and unimportant—but as I write with a view of expoſing the errors and prejudices of the Rockingham party, I could not avoid the mention of them, becauſe Mr. Burke, and thoſe who act with him, have deſcribed the ſervants of the Company in India as * "ob-" ſcure young men, animated with all the " avarice of age, and all the impetuoſity of " youth, who roll in one after another; wave " after wave: and there is nothing before the " eyes of the natives but an endleſs, hopeleſs " proſpect of birds of prey and paſſage, with " appetites continually renewing for a food " that is continually waſting."

* Mr. Burke's ſpeech of the 1ſt of December, 1783, publiſhed by himſelf, printed by Dodſley.

Mr. Haſtings, after an education at Weſtminſter, (where he was much eſteemed, and went into college the head of his election) was appointed a writer to Bengal, in the year 1749. At that time the Company poſſeſſed no territories in India, a few inconſiderable villages excepted, in the neighbourhood of their factories, for which they paid an acknowledgment to the eſtabliſhed government of the country.

The Mogul Empire, which had been declining from the death of Aurengzebe in 1707, was almoſt entirely deſtroyed by the invaſion of Nadir Shah; and though the forms of it were preſerved, the Emperor has exerciſed no authority of any kind in Bengal for the laſt forty years. It is not true, as many have erroneouſly imagined, that the Engliſh overturned the authority of the Mogul in Indoſtan. Ally Verdy Cawn, who was Nabob of Bengal in 1750, was in fact an uſurper, having illegally depoſed and murdered his predeceſſor; and he tranſmitted the government to his grandſon, Surajah Dowlah, in oppoſition to the laws of the empire. From 1750 to 1756,

1756, as from their firſt eſtabliſhment in Bengal, the Engliſh were peaceable and inoffenſive merchants, ſubject at times to the inſults, oppreſſion, and injuſtice of the Mahomedan government; and in 1756 were wantonly, and without the leaſt provocation, attacked by that inhuman tyrant, Surajah Dowlah, who, ſtrange to tell, has of late years found advocates in a Britiſh Houſe of Commons. The conſequence of this attack is well known. The Engliſh were driven from their forts and ſettlements, and many of them were cruelly murdered. At this period Mr. Haſtings was ſituated in the interior parts of Bengal, and when taken priſoner was treated with a peculiar degree of kindneſs and attention, juſtly attributed to the reſpect in which his character was even then held by the natives. He ſpoke their language,* and

* I cannot omit here to notice a very curious circumſtance.—Mr. Haſtings, who has been in the habit of ſpeaking the Perſic and Indoſtan language for about thirty years, obſerved in a minute in 1773, that he ſpoke the language *imperfectly*, compared to Sujah Dowlah. This modeſt declaration Mr. Burke and Mr. Wyndham took literally, and ſeriouſly argued, that it was to them a proof of Mr. Haſtings having ſome improper buſineſs to tranſact with Sujah Dowlah, ſince he would not uſe an interpreter, though he ſpoke the language *imperfectly*.

was

was deemed the beſt Perſian ſcholar at that time in Bengal. The conſequence of Surajah Dowlah's conduct is well known. By exertions which poſterity will not credit, the Engliſh recovered not only their former ſtanding in Bengal, but effected a revolution in the government of that country, which led to our preſent envied empire in Indoſtan.

Mr. Haſtings, who ſerved as a volunteer at the capture of Calcutta, was confidentially employed by Lord Clive after that event, until his Lordſhip quitted the country; and Mr. Haſtings himſelf, after having filled the firſt offices in Bengal for many years, returned to England in 1765, with a fortune exceedingly moderate, and with the reputation of extraordinary abilities. He remained in England until 1769, and was then appointed ſecond in council, and to ſucceed to the government of Madras. He was removed and appointed Governor of Bengal in April, 1772, when the affairs of the Eaſt India Company were before Parliament. In the following year Lord North propoſed *his plan* for the better government of India. His Lordſhip was then the Miniſter: of courſe his meaſures were highly

reprehenſible

reprehenſible in the opinion of the Rockingham party.

In the Houſe of Commons, Mr. Burke told us, that the diſtreſſes of the Company (for the Company was at that time diſtreſſed, and its ſervants abuſed) were "aggravated "with all the parade of indiſcreet declama- "tion, their charter wantonly violated, and "hundreds deprived of their franchiſe."

* The proteſt of the Marquis of Rockingham, the Duke of Portland, and Devonſhire, Earl Fitz-

* Mr. Burke has generally been ſuppoſed to have written this famous, and elegant proteſt—but at all events he has read it; ſince it has been ſo much the ſubject of converſation. It contains the following fine paſſage: "Becauſe the election of executive officers in parliament, "*is plainly unconſtitutional*, and an example of the moſt "pernicious kind, productive of intrigue and faction; "and calculated for extending a corrupt influence in the "crown. *It frees miniſters from reſponſibility, while it leaves "them all the effects of patronage.* It defeats the wiſe deſign "of the Conſtitution, which placed the nomination of all "officers either immediately or derivatively *in the crown*, "whilſt it committed the check upon improper nomina- "tions *in parliament*. But *this bill*, by confounding thoſe "powers which the Conſtitution *meant to keep ſeparate*, has "deſtroyed

Fitzwilliam, &c. is upon the records of Parliament; and the compoſition is as remarkable for its elegance, as for the juſtice of its reaſoning; but every ſyllable in it is as applicable to Mr. Fox's bill of 1783, as to Lord North's of 1773. One part of that bill of 1773, and one only, paſſed with extraordinary unanimi-

" deſtroyed the control, along with every wiſe proviſion " of the laws to prevent the abuſes in the nomination to, " or exerciſe of office."

Mr. Burke, in his printed ſpeech of the 1ſt of December, 1783, ſays, " It is argued as a part of the bill " derogatory to the prerogatives of the crown, that the " commiſſioners named in the bill are to continue for a " ſhort term of years; and becauſe during that time they " are not at the mercy of every predominant faction of " the court. Does not this objection lie againſt the " preſent Directors? *Did it not lie againſt the Governor " General and Council named in the act of* 1773—who were " inveſted by name as the preſent Commiſſioners, and to " be appointed in the body of the Act of Parliament? " *Did it not lie againſt the appointments in* 1780, *upon the very " ſame terms? Yet at none of theſe times*, whatever other " objections the ſcheme might be liable to, was it ſup- " poſed to be a *derogation to the juſt prerogative of the crown*, " that a commiſſion, created by Act of Parliament, ſhould " have its members named by the authority which called " it into exiſtence." What a pity! that a ſtateſman ſhould have ſo ſhort a memory.

ty; I mean the clauſe which appointed Mr. Haſtings the Governor General of Bengal.

I ſhall not detail the unfortunate diſputes which ſubſiſted in Bengal, for many years. Thoſe who have had an opportunity of obſerving the conduct of Mr. Francis ſince his return to England, will determine how well he appears to be calculated for preſerving harmony at a council board. My deſign is merely to bring forward ſuch tranſactions of Mr. Haſtings's government as attracted the notice of the Rockingham party. The firſt advices received from Bengal, after the appointment of the Supreme Council, were, that the moſt violent diſſentions prevailed, and that both parties deſired a ſpeedy deciſion. The repreſentation on the part of the majority was, that Mr. Haſtings had engaged the Company in a very unjuſt and hazardous war, for the extirpation of the Rohillas. Mr. Haſtings contended, that the war was neither hazardous nor unjuſt, and that at all events it was concluded prior to the arrival of the majority in Bengal. Of courſe they were in no ſhape reſponſible for it.

I find

I find a ſentiment of Mr. Haſtings upon the vexatious retroſpect he was forced into, ſo admirably repeated by Mr. Burke in one of his Briſtol ſpeeches, that I ſhall give it you in his own words:—"It is not to be imagined "how much of ſervice is loſt from ſpirits full of "activity and full of energy, who are preſſing, "who are ruſhing forward to great and capital "objects, when you oblige them to be conti-"nually looking back. Whilſt they are de-"fending one ſervice, they defraud you of an "hundred."

The reſult of a reference from both parties to the Court of Directors, and the Miniſter, was, that Lord North and thirteen Directors were determined in 1776 to remove Mr. Haſtings, and to appoint General Clavering the Governor General of Bengal. And how this removal was prevented, Lord North has lately told us—by the Proprietors, who were too ſtrong for his Lordſhip. Yet though the Rohilla war was the meaſure that Lord North thought ſo objectionable, and the meaſure for which he would have removed Mr. Haſtings, the Rockingham party to a man voted in his favour,

and were in fact the means of preſerving him in his ſtation; for if his ſupport had been leſs powerful, Lord North would have effected in Parliament, in the winter of 1776, what he could not accompliſh at the India Houſe during the ſummer.

## LETTER VII.

I OBSERVED in my laſt letter that Lord North was deterred from propoſing the recall of Mr. Haſtings by an Act of Parliament in the winter of 1776, in conſequence of the ſtrenuous ſupport which Lord Rockingham and his friends had given to that gentleman at the India Houſe during the ſummer. —In the courſe of the ſame winter, Mr. Fox, with great truth and juſtice, remarked, that the * *continuation of our American diſpute muſt inevitably involve us in every quarter of the globe:* —A prophecy which he frequently repeated, until the war with France actually broke out. Lord North, who certainly had then great difficulties to encounter, was unwilling to add to them, by provoking a freſh oppoſition on the affairs of India.—Not a word therefore paſſed in Parliament relative to Mr. Haſtings, until 1778-9, when his commiſſion as Governor General expired.—He was then reappointed for one year—in 1779-80, for another—and in 1780-81, *for ten years*, with-

* See Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates, 1776.

out oppoſition or even remark from any quarter.—It is worthy of notice, that though Mr. Haſtings retained his high ſituation, in ſuch a ſeaſon of difficulty and danger to the whole Empire, with the full approbation of all parties, the unconſtitutional influence of Lord North in Leadenhall-ſtreet, was a ſubject of continual animadverſion.—The Party alſo declared, that the Earl of Sandwich owed his ſafety to the ſame deſtructive influence—yet the ſame Earl of Sandwich, a *few years after*, was the great champion of Mr. Fox's India Bill in the Houſe of Lords!!!

The invaſion of the Carnatic by Hyder Ally Cawn, and the diſputes in Bengal relative to the powers of the judges, occaſioned the appointment of two committees of the Houſe of Commons.—The ſecret Committee was chiefly compoſed of Lord North's friends, and the Select Committee of Oppoſition Members. The ſelect Committee was originally appointed to conſider one ſubject—but in the ſecond ſeſſion of its meeting, the Chairman, General Smith, moved in the Houſe, that his Committee ſhould be inſtructed to conſider how the Britiſh poſſeſſions in India could be beſt held and governed for the advantage of the

nation, &c. This propoſition was made preciſely at that point of time when Lord North was ſo cloſely attacked upon his American war, I mean immediately after we were confounded by the capture of our army in Virginia. The Miniſter, either growing indifferent as to India, or having no objection to throw *ſuch a tub to the whale*, made no objection to the motion—it paſſed unanimouſly; and from that moment the Rockingham party claimed India as their own. This Committee, and the other were as buſily engaged as men could be, conſidering that the one ſet had the American war to attack, and the Miniſter to turn out; and the other had the ſame American war to defend, and the Miniſter to keep in.

In March, 1782, Lord North was conquered. A ſyſtematic oppoſition of ſixteen years to every meaſure of Government, the Parliamentary appointment, and re-appointments of Mr. Haſtings excepted, had weakened and reduced this once flouriſhing country, ſo much, that it was become the pity and contempt of all Europe, at leaſt we were told ſo by our own Miniſters, the Rockingham party.

The

The Chairman of the Secret Committee, Mr. Dundas, had been long in habits of the ſtricteſt friendſhip with Lord North, and his great defence againſt the vehemence of Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke. He had pronounced his Lordſhip's panegyric in moſt flattering terms, allowing, however, that he had not quite ſpirit and vigour enough in his compoſition. Mr. Dundas had the courage to mention the word *Coalition* in the Houſe of Commons, and to recommend *the thing itſelf*, a few days only before the great change. His hint was received with the utmoſt indignation by the Rockingham party. Mr. Fox ſaid, *(and they all ſaid "Hear him")* * that the moment when "he ſhould make terms with any one of "them, he would reſt ſatisfied to be *called the* "*moſt infamous of mankind.* He could not "for an inſtant think of a coalition with "men, who in every public and private "tranſaction, as Miniſters, had ſhewn themſelves *void of every principle of honour and* "*honeſty.* In the hands of ſuch men he "would not truſt his honour, *no not for a* "*minute.*" In a ſubſequent ſpeech this pro-

* See Parliamentary Debates, 1782.

ſcription

ſcription was ſaid to extend to *his Majeſty's Cabinet Miniſters only* (the Lord Chancellor excepted). Of the Cabinet Miniſters of that day were *Lord North, Lord Stormont, and Mr. Welbore Ellis, and Lord Sandwich.* Mr. Dundas was not a proſcribed man.

On the 9th of April, 1782, Mr. Dundas enlightened the Houſe of Commons with a blaze of Oriental information. He afterwards propoſed the recall of Mr. Haſtings, on this ground, and this only, " That he had forfeited the con- " fidence of the native princes of India," and that his recall was neceſſary as a ſtep preparatory to peace.—Mr. Dundas has lately very candidly, fairly, and fully acknowledged* that he was happy the Eaſt-India Company had ſo ſucceſsfully reſiſted his motion, convinced as he has been from ſubſequent information that the recall of Mr. Haſtings would have been a moſt pernicious meaſure—Not ſo the Rockingham party—They are above human errors and weakneſſes; they ſtill defend an act which is the jeſt of the whole world, that party excepted.

It is impoſſible for me, Mr. Woodfall, to

* See Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates, 1786.

detail more of the miſerable intrigues of that miſerable period than the violence of the party has diſcovered.—* Mr. Burke has more than once attacked Mr. Dundas for his inconſiſtency; and he has been told by Mr. Dundas very plainly, that there were members in the Houſe who had earneſtly preſſed him to move the recall of Mr. Haſtings on the ground of delinquency, which he had peremptorily refuſed to do. This redounds to the credit of Mr. Dundas, if we conſider the confidence which the Houſe of Commons and the nation *then* placed in the Rockingham party: and if we conſider alſo that they were *then* in the habit of paying very ſtrong compliments to the ſame Mr. Dundas, whom they ſaid was not a proſcribed man.

A circumſtance occurred when the recall of Mr. Haſtings was moved in the month of May, 1782, which ſhews the unconſtitutional violence of the man who leads the faction on the ſubject of India. Commodore Johnſtone calmly urged the Houſe to be cautious how they paſſed a reſolution which they could not enforce, and reminded them of the Middleſex Election. Mr. Burke with vehemence aſked what power in this kingdom

* See Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates of this ſeſſion.

would

would dare to reſiſt a vote of the Houſe of Commons; and, with the ſame vehemence, ſaid he would impeach Directors, and Proprietors, if they did. The reſolution paſſed. It *was* ſucceſsfully, and happily for this kingdom, reſiſted, in defiance of Mr. Burke's threats. Lord Rockingham ſoon after died; and the Proprietors eſcaped impeachment for what Mr. Burke has had the preſumption to call* *their audacity*. Diſappointment, and the reſignation of the party, followed the death of their leader, and the next year the ever-famed Coalition.

Strengthened by a connection with Lord North, the views of the party were extended. The removal of Mr. Haſtings was indeed one object with them; but they graſped at another much more conſiderable, the poſſeſſion of the Eaſt-India Company. To effect theſe purpoſes, Mr. Fox brought in his bill; and here another circumſtance occurred which has lately been diſcovered. I ſhall mention it merely to expoſe the principles and conduct of the party towards thoſe who are in the way of their ambition. It is a fact admitted by all concerned, that the night preceding

* See Mr. Burke's Speech of the firſt of December, 1783—Printed by Dodſley.

the day on which Mr. Fox brought in his India Bill, Mr. Sheridan paid a viſit to a gentleman well known to be particularly connected with Mr. Haſtings: that Mr. Sheridan conſented to meet Major Scott, the avowed agent of Mr. Haſtings, the next morning, for ſome purpoſe or other: that Major Scott, upon being ſpoke to, declined a meeting with Mr. Sheridan, obſerving to the gentleman who ſpoke to him, that he was going to the gallery of the Houſe of Commons, where he ſhould hear the heads of Mr. Fox's bill. Theſe are circumſtances which admit of no ſort of doubt, and are fully allowed by all parties. A difference indeed exiſted upon a point which is totally immaterial to the purpoſe for which I have introduced this ſubject.—Major Scott affirmed, that he underſtood Mr. Sheridan was empowered to offer indemnity to Mr. Haſtings, provided his friends did not oppoſe the India bill. In this he appears to have been miſtaken, by the ſubſequent declaration of the gentleman with whom Mr. Sheridan communicated; for he has declared that the converſation chiefly turned upon this, whether Mr. Haſtings would come home, or erect the ſtandard of rebellion

in

in India. Such an idea as this Major Scott has ſaid could never enter his head, ſince all the world knew Mr. Haſtings had ſolicited his recall many months before Mr. Fox introduced his bill in the Houſe of Commons.

The treatment which Mr. Haſtings has received from the party, is indeed moſt curious.

In the paltry political intrigues for official appointments, I well know, Mr. Woodfall, that if a negociation is commenced, and the parties diſagree as to the terms, they are at full liberty to abuſe each other as violently as if no conferences for conciliation had been held, in full confidence that their private intrigues will not be alluded to in debate; and if Mr. Eden had not ſucceeded in forming the coalition, Mr. Fox would have been at full liberty to tell Lord North, as he had often told him before, that as a public man he was void of honour and honeſty; but Mr. Haſtings ſtands upon different ground; he did not empower Major Scott to deprecate the vengeance of any party; nor did the latter ever attempt it. The conduct of the Rock-

ingham

ingham faction was indeed upon this occaſion ſomewhat peculiar. No man will ſuppoſe that Mr. Sheridan, one of the ſecretaries to the Treaſury, would have conſented to an interview with Major Scott, without *ſome* communication with *ſome* of the Miniſtry; nor will I believe ſo ill of Mr. Sheridan, as to think he wanted to entrap Mr. Haſtings, by getting all the information he could from his agent, unleſs he had ſomething or other to propoſe that might have led to a future accommodation. In fact Mr. Sheridan has declared his own opinion very fairly and explicitly, and ſo plainly, that it excited the indignation of Mr. Burke very ſtrongly, who was pleaſed to ſay, that if Mr. Sheridan, nay, if all his Majeſty's Miniſters had determined to coaleſce with Mr. Haſtings,* he would ſingly have ſtood out. But what man in his ſenſes will believe this rhodomontade?

Was Mr. Burke for ſeven years leſs violent againſt Lord North, than he has been againſt Mr. Haſtings for four? Is there a man amongſt my countrymen ſo ſenſeleſs as to

* See Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates of this and the laſt ſeſſion.

believe

believe that the Rockingham party coaleſced with Lord North upon principle?—Be aſſured, Mr. Woodfall, that the ſame regard to *conveniency* which induced Mr. Burke to follow his party in calling Lord North his noble friend, who for years had been the object of his calumny and abuſe, would have reconciled him to Mr. Haſtings, had Mr. Sheridan ſucceeded in his wiſhes.—Were not the terrors of a parliamentary impeachment held over the head of Lord North during every year of the late war? Nay, Mr. Burke has told us, in the laſt ſeſſion,† that he had drawn out ſeven articles of impeachment againſt Lord North, and others, which he gave to the Marquis of Rockingham; yet at a ſubſequent period he very readily echoed Mr. Fox's doctrine of

*Inimicitiæ placabiles, amicitiæ ſempiterne.*

† See Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates of this ſeſſion.

## LETTER VIII.

I HAVE already ſtated to you the conduct of the Rockingham party on the firſt introduction of Mr. Fox's India bill.—I have invariably quoted the Parliamentary Debates as the chief ſource of all my information, and you will find, by referring to them, that the party grounded the neceſſity for that bill (which was acknowledged to be a ſtrong, harſh meaſure) upon the miſmanagement of Mr. Haſtings in the firſt inſtance, and in the ſecond upon his having eſtabliſhed ſo corrupt an influence in the great body of the Eaſt-India Company, the Proprietors, that it was abſolutely neceſſary to create a new power in the State, in order to effect his removal from the Government of Bengal: Mr. Sheridan himſelf has avowed, that he was anxious to meet Major Scott on the very day Mr. Fox opened his plan,* *in order to be convinced that Mr. Haſtings would not reſiſt the higheſt authority in Great Britain.* That Mr. Fox, and Mr. Burke, who pronounced the eulogium of a rebel in the Britiſh

* See Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates of the laſt ſeſſion.

Houſe of Commons * (General Montgomery) ſhould have attacked Mr. Haſtings, is perfectly in character—but that Lord North, who ſo nobly anſwered that eulogium by one expreſſive line,

" Curſe on his virtues, they have undone his country."

That his Lordſhip, I ſay, Mr. Woodfall, ſhould have joined theſe men in ſuch an undertaking, is indeed to be lamented. It brings to my recollection the following ſentence of a ſpeech delivered by Governor Johnſtone in the Houſe of Commons, ſoon after the diſmiſſion of the late adminiſtration—" According " to my political creed, whoever delivers up " his conſcience and opinion to the will of " another, makes over the moſt precious truſt " which God has delivered to him, upon a ſe- " curity incompatible with the dignity of a " noble mind. Friendſhip with men, growing " from correſponding ſentiments, is always to " be cultivated; but to turn like a poſt horſe, " to run the mazes of a timid hare, to go as

* See Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates, 1776.

" directed, and follow merely as others guide,
" without any conſcious virtue from a recti-
" tude of conduct, ariſing from the conviction
" of our own will, is a ſituation ſo mean, that
" ſuch characters ſhall receive no praiſes from
" me in ſtating their conſiſtency. To hear
" gentlemen talk of this kind of deſertion, *and*
" *to forget the deſertion of their own principles,*
" *regiſtered and recorded to the world, deſtroying*
" *by their actions of* 1784, *all that they have ſaid*
" *or done in* 1773, is one of thoſe proofs of
" political depravity which makes men ſick
" of all political purſuits, *and gives thoſe opinions*
" *to the public, that every man is equally involved*
" *in the purſuit of ſelf-intereſt.*"

Having mentioned Lord North, who is now one of the faction, I muſt give you his Lordſhip's *own account* of his conduct towards Mr. Haſtings, as I have extracted it from the Parliamentary Debates of the laſt ſeſſion. *

When the affairs of the Eaſt-India Company attracted the attention of Parliament in 1773, Lord North, then the Miniſter of Great Britain, propoſed Mr. Haſtings for the high office of Governor-General of Bengal: whether from miſrepreſentation, or from the ſuperior

* See Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates.

con-

connections of General Clavering and Colonel Monſon, has not yet appeared; but from one or both cauſes it certainly happened, that in the years 1775 and 1776, Lord North expreſſed a great anxiety to remove Mr. Haſtings from the government of Bengal, and he employed means not the moſt juſtifiable to effect his removal; but he was foiled *by the ſtrenuous exertions of the Rockingham Party in behalf of Mr. Haſtings.*—His Lordſhip *again changed his opinion*, and I find him in 1778, and the two following years, actually propoſing to the Houſe of Commons that Mr. Haſtings ſhould be continued in the Government of Bengal—a fact which Lord North has allowed moſt fully, aſſigning three admirable reaſons for his conduct—The firſt, that it was in a ſeaſon of war, and of great hazard and danger; the ſecond, that Mr. Haſtings poſſeſſed vigour and abilities; the third, that he enjoyed the confidence of the Eaſt-India Company. How muſt we lament the weakneſs of human nature, and the operation of Mr. Burke's "Doctrine of Connections," when we reflect that Lord North has joined (though apparently very much againſt his opinion), in the perſecution of Mr. Haſtings, that faction which had

ſo often and ſo loudly threatened to bring him to the block for his American war, and corrupt Government.

In truth, Mr. Woodfall, there were arguments urged by the faction in ſupport of their India Bill, that were calculated to ſuit the opinions of all the various Members who compoſed the majority on every diviſion. * The miſmanagement of Mr. Haſtings, though an aſſertion directly in the face of truth and common ſenſe, was a ſound argument with ſome —the bankruptcy of the Company cajoled others. The abſurdity of men, women and children, Chriſtians, Jews, and Infidels, governing a mighty Empire, was a flattering language to thoſe who hoped to have ſome ſhare of this government in future.—Parliament (which had loſt America) was alone competent to the preſervation of India, and one branch of the legiſlature paſſed the Bill.

The faction in the Houſe of Lords, on its firſt introduction (and it was preſented by a numerous and determined band) ſhewed the ſtrongeſt diſpoſition to hurry it through with every poſſible diſpatch. " It muſt be paſſed in

* See Parliamentary Debates, 1703.

" time for all the various arrangements to be ſent " from England in the month of February, or " India was loſt. Mr. Haſtings was out of the " queſtion: Neither his merits nor demerits were " before the Houſe." Such was the language of the noble Lords who ſupported the Rockingham faction; but with what manlineſs, firmneſs, and force of expreſſion was the fallacy of it expoſed by Lord Thurlow!—He proved, to the conviction of all who had not ſurrendered their underſtanding to a party, that the bill was actually grounded upon neceſſity, and nothing elſe; that the neceſſity was ſuppoſed to have ariſen from the miſmanagement of Mr. Haſtings and his conſtituents, the Eaſt India Company.—Throwing aſide, therefore, *that reſerve and caution which had diſtinguiſhed the conduct of the oppoſers of the bill in the Houſe of Commons*, he boldly and ſtrenuouſly challenged his Majeſty's Miniſters to prove the abuſes that had been committed in India, or to ſhew any probable ground for the aſſertion in the preamble, that the Britiſh intereſts there would fall into utter ruin if ſo pernicious a bill was not paſſed into a law.—This was a ſtyle of oppoſition which the friends of the

the bill were little prepared to encounter.*—
" Whence (Lord Thurlow obſerved) this re-
" markable degree of delicacy towards Mr.
" Haſtings?—The little, low, dirty attempts
" of malice and faction to deſtroy the charac-
" ter of that great man, can have no weight
" with your Lordſhips.—How induſtriouſly,
" my Lords, has every tranſaction of Mr.
" Haſtings's long government, that could tend
" to criminate him, been circulated!—The
" Reports of a Committee have been ſold as
" pamphlets.—The ingenuity of ſome men, and
" the warm imagination of others, have been
" long employed to fully the well-earned re-
" putation of Mr. Haſtings. To my mind,
" my Lords, Mr. Haſtings is one of the moſt
" extraordinary characters that this country
" has ever produced—He has ſerved the Eaſt
" India Company thirty-three years in the
" moſt important ſituations—twelve years as
" Governor, or Governor-General of Ben-
" gal—He is a man, whoſe honour, whoſe
" integrity, whoſe firmneſs of mind, and
" whoſe perſeverance are not only very ge-
" nerally acknowledged in this kingdom, and

* See Parliamentary Debates, 1783.

" in

" in Aſia, but throughout the continent of
" Europe—He is a man, my Lords, who
" poſſeſſes a moſt extenſive knowledge of the
" languages, the politics, the cuſtoms, and the
" revenues of Indoſtan—He is a man, who
" infuſed the ſpirit which animated his own
" mind, and roſe ſuperior to the aſtoniſhing
" difficulties he had to encounter, into the
" breaſts of our brave and intrepid country-
" men, who have ſo nobly diſtinguiſhed them-
" ſelves in Aſia. Mr. Haſtings is a man, *who*
" *has re-eſtabliſhed peace in India, who furniſhed*
" *reſources for the war while it laſted*, by an
" increaſe of revenue in Bengal, and has pre-
" ſerved the provinces under his more imme-
" diate control in peace and tranquillity.
" Mr. Haſtings is a man, who has held a
" bold and conſiſtent language throughout.
" What have been the means, my Lords, to
" which Mr. Haſtings has had recourſe, to
" preſerve his power? Has he employed the
" low and dirty arts of intrigue, which have
" heretofore been practiſed? No, my Lords
" —He has been ſupported by the voice
" of the Public—by great and meritorious
" actions. This being my opinion of Mr.
" Haſtings, I ſhall ſupport him until evidence

" of

" of his delinquency ſhall be produced. " Whence, my Lords, this extreme deſire to " avoid a full and fair diſcuſſion of this queſ- " tion? I again repeat it, if Mr. Haſtings " is guilty, recall him, puniſh him; but " do not let us be deluded by tales fabri- " cated for the purpoſe of the hour, and cir- " culated with a degree of induſtry which diſ- " graces the dignity and honour of the Britiſh " nation."

This manly ſpeech from ſo conſpicuous a nobleman as Lord Thurlow, produced a wonderful effect in the Houſe of Peers, and throughout the nation. Lord Camden took an early opportunity of declaring, that Mr. Haſtings " was the ſoul of our ſucceſs in In- " dia;" and his nephew, Mr. George Hardinge, (the ſame gentleman *who took the other ſide of the queſtion a few months ago)* when pleading the cauſe of the Company at the bar of the Houſe of Lords, declared that the ſervices of Lord Chatham and Mr. Haſtings would " make them the idols of poſterity, " *when their little adverſaries would be too obſcure* " *for infamy to record them.*"

Here

Here, Mr. Woodfall, the Rockingham Adminiſtration were fairly brought to the teſt. I really have a tenderneſs for the characters of the noble Lords who ſupported the bill, and this reſtrains me from expoſing that fatal ignorance of India, and every thing connected with it, which thoſe diſcovered, who, if the bill had paſſed, were to have governed it. Any Enſign of ſix months ſtanding in Bengal would have given a much better account of the country than either of the four noble Lords, to whom the hard taſk of defending Mr. Fox's bill was aſſigned. Aſſertion was neceſſarily oppoſed to aſſertion then; but it is actually a fact, that the ſupporters of the bill were not right, even by accident, in a ſingle prediction that they hazarded, and that no one of thoſe conſequences has followed, which they declared were inevitable, when their bill miſcarried. I ſhall proceed to detail the conduct of the party to Mr. Haſtings, after the failure of their bill which Lord Abingdon truly deſcribed as a bill "to wreſt the reins of go-"vernment out of the executive power, and "to place it in the hands of a ſelf-created de-"magogue, ſupported by a factious and deſ-"perate cabal."

## LETTER IX.

MR. Fox, though he commenced his political life decidedly hoſtile to the Rockingham party, is at preſent the efficient leader of it in the Houſe of Commons. I am told it is to the patriotic efforts of this gentleman, * when he was in oppoſition to Lord North, that we owe the publication of the Parliamentary Debates.—Mr. Burke, Mr. Francis, Mr. Beaufoy, Major Scott, and Mr. George Hardinge, are ſuppoſed to write, and publiſh their own ſpeeches.—Members of Parliament very well know, that the public in this country, and throughout Europe, eagerly read the Debates wet from the preſs. I have a right to conclude, therefore, that if any gentleman's ſpeech was groſsly miſrepreſented, he would make his complaint to the Houſe.—Chandler, in the introduction to his Debates, page 1, obſerves, "That no hiſtory, or diſſertation on "State affairs of any kind whatever, is in any "reſpect ſo ſerviceable as a view of our Parlia-

* See Mr. Fox's Life—publiſhed by Debrett.

"mentary

" mentary Tranſactions; eſpecially if diligently " collected, regularly digeſted, and delivered " with candour and perſpicuity. *For by this* " *means we examine parties by their own light,* " *adjuſt their characters by their actions, not their* " *pretenſions, and enable ourſelves to form a right* " *judgment of the preſent by the paſt—We become* " *acquainted with the men, their motives, pre-* " *judices, capacities, and virtues, as well as* " *the ſubjects they canvaſs.*"—By the Parliamentary Debates alone, as publiſhed by Mr. Debrett, a friend to the party, I mean to go on with my examination of their conduct towards Mr. Haſtings.

On the day Mr. Fox's bill was ſo fortunately defeated in the Houſe of Lords, the faction in the Commons was violent beyond the example of former times, and Earl Temple became the firſt object of attack. " The queſtion " then, as a noble Lord* informed us, was not " on the merits or demerits of an uſurper—it was " not on the management or miſmanagement of " the greateſt commercial company in the world" —Who the uſurper *was* to whom his Lord-

* See Parliamentary Debates, Dec. 17, 1783.

ſhip, and afterwards Mr. Fox, alluded, we are yet to learn; who *would* have been the uſurper, and the ſucceſsful uſurper, if the bill had paſſed, we all very well know—but that Mr. Haſtings was an uſurper we know to be an aſſertion as unfounded as one that I have read in a printed ſpeech of Mr. Burke's, "that Mr. "Haſtings has been loaded for years with the "execrations of the natives of India, and ſtruck "and blaſted with the reſolutions of the Houſe "of Commons." It certainly, Mr. Woodfall, requires no ſmall degree of party attachment, to enable a man to ſubſcribe to ſuch nonſenſe.

The firſt violence of the party upon ſo great and unexpected a defeat, having been exhauſted, India again became of conſequence; * an Honourable Gentleman obſerved, that "meaſures muſt be immediately taken with "regard to India—the fate of India was at "ſtake, and there muſt not be an inſtant of "delay." A diſſolution of Parliament "might "terminate in a total ſeparation of this coun-"try from her territories in the Eaſt." A reſolution was moved and carried, that the Houſe would conſider as an enemy to his country any perſon who ſhould preſume to

* See Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates, Dec. 17, 1785.

adviſe his Majeſty to prevent or in any manner interrupt the diſcharge of the important duty of conſidering a ſuitable remedy for the abuſes which have prevailed in the Eaſt Indies. This was the motion of one member, and adopted by the Houſe. Mr. Fox declared he would bring in the ſame bill again, or nearly the ſame, and five days afterwards, the Houſe aſſerted, in an addreſs to the throne, "*that the diſorders prevailing in the Government* "*of the Eaſt Indies at home and abroad, call aloud* "*for inſtant reformation.*"

Now, Mr. Woodfall, if words are not really wind every where (as Mr. Burke once told us), and more windy in the Houſe of Commons than any where elſe; if there is force and meaning in language, I ſay the Rockingham party was fairly committed to prove theſe aſſertions, and they muſt confeſs themſelves to have been moſt groſsly miſled in every thing they advanced relative to India. I repeat it, as a ſingular and extraordinary circumſtance, they were not right, even by accident, in one ſingle prediction that they hazarded, relative to India, from the year 1782, to the preſent time. This is a truth which cannot be too ſtrongly impreſſed

impreſſed upon the minds of the people of England, and therefore I ſhall ſtate it in terms that no man can contradict, or explain away.

In the month of May, 1782, the Houſe were induced to vote, that it was the duty of the Court of Directors to recall Mr. Haſtings from the government of Bengal. At that moment we were at war with the French, Spaniards, Dutch, Hyder Ally Cawn, the Mahrattas, and the Americans. The vote was reſiſted.—When the Parliament met in December, 1782, the Rockingham party were too buſily employed in turning out Lord Shelburne, to beſtow a thought upon Mr. Haſtings; but no ſooner was the grand buſineſs of the Coalition effected, than their fears for India were again proclaimed. The plan, however, was not matured that ſeſſion; and Mr. Haſtings was only abuſed, and continued in office.——In November 1783, Mr. Fox produced his bill, and its preamble recited what the party avowed in their ſpeeches, "that India would "fall into utter ruin, if a fit and becoming re-"medy for the abuſes and diſorders that pre-"vailed there, were not inſtantly applied." In the ſame ſpirit they perſiſted till the diſſolution of

of the late Parliament on the 25th of March, 1784.

Let me next turn your attention to the actual ſtate of India, in order to prove my aſſertion, that they were not once right, even by accident.

In the month of May, 1782, preciſely at the moment Mr. Haſtings's recall was recommended in the Houſe of Commons, becauſe he had forfeited the confidence of the native Princes of India, and could not make peace, he *actually made a peace with the Mahrattas*; for which he has ſince received the thanks of the Board of Control, and the unanimous thanks of the Directors, and Proprietors.

In the month of February, 1783, when the moſt impudent and falſe libels were publiſhed againſt Mr. Haſtings, by a bookſeller in Piccadilly, under the title of "Reports of the Select Committee," the moſt ſtrenuous exertions were made, in order to preſerve India to Great Britain.

In the month of November, 1783, when Mr

Mr. Fox deſcribed the internal and external government of the Company, as diſgraceful to the national honour, and oppreſſive to the natives, our character as a nation in India, ſtood higher than at any former period of time.

When Mr. Fox accuſed Mr. Haſtings of perſonally ill-treating the Nabob Vizier of Oude; and when he ſtruck off eight hundred thouſand pounds of the Company's property, as irrecoverable from the Vizier, that Prince repoſed the moſt implicit confidence in the late Governor General, adopted the plans which he recommended, and has ſince paid the debt due to the Company.—— When the Party ſaid India was convulſed to the centre, we actually had not an enemy there: and it is alſo a fact of undoubted notoriety, that while the party were deſcribing the revenues of Bengal as declining, and its population decreaſed, it was fuller of inhabitants than at any former period, the revenues more productive, and private property perfectly ſecure. I have therefore a right to repeat, *that the Party were not right, even by accident, in any one aſſertion they made relative to Mr. Haſtings, or the ſtate of India.*

Much

Much undeſerved cenſure was formerly caſt upon the Eaſt India Company, for reſiſting a reſolution of the Houſe of Commons. And here I have an opportunity of examining the conſtitutional principles of the party, as delivered by their ſpeaker, Mr. Burke. When it was firſt propoſed to vote "that it was the "duty of the Directors to recall Mr. Haſt-"ings," and Governor Johnſtone, with more humility than generally appears in his conduct, barely ventured to doubt how far the Directors were bound to obey a reſolution of the Houſe of Commons, Mr. Burke vehemently aſked, what man, or body of men, would dare to diſobey it?—In his ſpeech of the 1ſt of December, 1783, Mr. Burke ſays, "Even ſince the "beginning of this ſeſſion the ſame act of auda-"city was repeated."—This is an extract from a ſpeech written deliberately by the gentleman himſelf, publiſhed above a month after he ſpoke it. The ſame extra-judicial authority was again attempted by the late Houſe of Commons after the diſmiſſion of the Portland Adminiſtration, when they voted that the Lords of the Treaſury ought not to allow the Company to accept bills beyond a certain

amount. * Lord Mulgrave obſerved, that it would be abſurd to confine them, by a reſolution of one branch of the Legiſlature, from doing that which by law they were authorized to do. Surely this is ſound reaſoning; for a reſolution of the Houſe of Commons is the law of the land, or it is not; and the caſe of the Company, and the Lords of the Treaſury, were preciſely the ſame. Yet Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke took fire, and found it perfectly conſiſtent with men who came in under the influence of the Houſe of Lords, to deſpiſe the reſolutions of the Houſe of Commons.—This point was afterwards very fully argued by the Lords; and two of the greateſt men that have adorned this or any other age, the Lord Chancellor and the Earl of Mansfield, concurred in aſſerting that a reſolution of the Houſe of Commons was not binding upon any body of men out of the Houſe, and that the Eaſt-India Company deſerved great applauſe for having had the magnanimity, the ſpirit, and the good ſenſe to continue Mr. Haſtings in the government of Bengal, in defiance of a reſolution of the Houſe of Commons. Fortified by ſuch

* See Parliamentary Debates of December 24, 1783.

great

great and reſpectable authorities, I imagine, Mr. Woodfall, it will be perfectly indifferent to the Eaſt-India Company, how often Mr. Burke accuſes them of audacity, for their preſumption in differing from the Rockingham Party, as to the merits of their own ſervants.

## LETTER X.

I Obſerved in my laſt letter, that from the 18th of December, 1783, when the Rockingham faction was diſmiſſed from the councils of their Sovereign, to the day of the diſſolution of the laſt Parliament, they continued to predict the ruin, if not the total loſs of India, unleſs their Bill, or one ſimilar to it, was adopted. We have already lived long enough to know how groſsly the party was deceived, and I cannot too often repeat, *that in their predictions as to India, they were not once right, even by accident.*—This nation has ample cauſe to lament that they were equally miſinformed, a few years ago, as to America.

It is much to be lamented that a few reſpectable families in this country ſhould ſtudiouſly encourage a factious oppoſition to every Adminiſtration of which they do not form a part: I ſhould be at a loſs how to account for a conduct of this kind, if a very honourable man had not himſelf given me a clue, by which it may be fairly explained.—

plained.—Lord John Cavendiſh, after he had acceded to the Coalition, took notice, in the Houſe of Commons, * "of the nature of "political connections, and ſaid, it had ever "been cuſtomary for men of great abilities, "and men of high rank and weight in the "country, to unite—It rarely happened that "the abilities and the fortunes of men went "together. Men of the greateſt affluence ſel- "dom were poſſeſſed of the moſt powerful ta- "lents. In order, therefore, to do their coun- "try ſervice, it became the one deſcription of "perſons to connect itſelf with the other. He "had followed that rule, and though others "might not have ſo affluent a fortune as he "was bleſſed with, they had greater abilities, "and by joining both, he was convinced he "made himſelf reſpectable, and contributed eſ- "ſentially to the public good."—I believe Lord John Cavendiſh poſſeſſes a ſtronger under- ſtanding by far, than many of thoſe men to whom he gave the credit of abilities ſuperior to his own.—But here we have again, unfor- tunately, Mr. Burke's Doctrine of Connection.† —"The Rockinghams, the Cavendiſhes, the

* See Parliamentary Debates, Jan. 1783.

† See Mr. Burke's Letter to the Sheriffs of Briſtol.

"Bentinks,

" Bentinks, the Fitzwilliams, and the Keppels," are intitled, by their rank in the country, to be Miniſters, though totally unfit for high offices, either from inability, indolence, or a love of gaming, and diſſipation.—Twice have they been in Adminiſtration, and it is a fact too notorious to be denied and explained away, that each time their centre, and rear ranks, though unexperienced in buſineſs, were the efficient men. Hence it happened that they blundered ſo groſsly, both as to America and to India. But is no qualification neceſſary to a Miniſter of Great Britain, except rank in the State, and the attachment of a party? I remember Mr. Dundas aſſerted laſt year in the Houſe of Commons, (proteſting at the ſame time he meant no offence) that though the Duke of Portland was at the head of Adminiſtration, all the world knew he was not *the Miniſter*.

From this fatal " Doctrine of Connec-" tion," and from an opinion too prevalent with many men, that if the elder branches of the Whig families are the greateſt dunces in the nation, they muſt be Miniſters, it actually happens, that there are, at this moment, more *political adventurers* dependant upon that party, than have exiſted in England from the Reſtoration

Reſtoration to the acceſſion of his preſent Majeſty.

God forbid that I ſhould aſſert, or even inſinuate, that the ſtricteſt honour is not conſiſtent with a very moderate fortune, or even with poverty; but when I ſee men rolling in chariots about this great town, and living in a ſtyle of two, or three thouſand pounds a year, who do not poſſeſs as many pence, I muſt know that thoſe men will go through thick and thin with the party whoſe ſucceſs is to bring them into office. How is it poſſible to account for a Coalition, which ſhocked the common ſenſe of mankind, upon any other ground than this, that many who compoſed it found the emoluments of office not only convenient but neceſſary, and of courſe the great Whig families were induced to forfeit their conſiſtency, to unſay in one hour all that they had been aſſerting for twenty years, ſatisfied by a ſalvo Mr. Burke had provided, "that this country "never had been ſo great, as under a Govern-"ment of Connection."

Mr. Pulteney was accuſed of apoſtaſy, and, as Earl of Bath, the people deſpiſed and deſerted him.

him. But Mr. Pulteney did not venture to coaleſce with Sir Robert Walpole. The parliamentary language during Sir Robert's adminiſtration was violent—To the parliamentary language during the miniſtry of Lord North we muſt apply a ſtronger term. Imagination cannot fix upon expreſſions more harſh and vehement, than for many years were directed to Lord North, by Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke. I have already ſelected a few ſpecimens of the language of the former gentleman. If it were poſſible, the abuſe of Mr. Burke was ſtill more virulent; he not only pledged himſelf at one time to impeach Lord North, but avowed that the articles were ready drawn, and in his pocket. The ſeſſion preceding the Coalition, he declared * "that the language of Lord "North was impudent, was audacious, was "ſomething worſe.—He truſted a day of reck-"oning would come; and whenever that day "came, he ſhould be able, *by impeachment*, to "bring upon the heads of the authors of theſe "unhappy affairs, the puniſhment of them.— "The nation as an animal was dead; but *the* "*vermin which fed on it ſtill had an exiſtence.*

* See Parliamentary Debates of 1781 and 1782.

"The

" The noble Lord dealt in cheats and deluſi-
" ons; they were the daily traffic of his in-
" vention!—A week!—The noble Lord had
" often held out a cheat for half that time! For
" a day only! Nay for a ſingle hour! He had
" practiſed cheats upon the Houſe, which died
" away even before the debate was ended, to
" favour which they were contrived. The
" noble Lord would continue to play off his
" cheats and deluſions on that Houſe as long
" as he thought it neceſſary, and had *money*
" *enough at command, to bribe gentlemen to pretend*
" *they believed them.*—With indignation he de-
" clared, he wondered how the noble Lord
" dared to talk of Britiſh feelings! He! (ſaid
" Mr. Burke) he talk of Britiſh feelings!—
" He that has ruined the Britiſh Empire, and
" *waſted its blood, and treaſure!*—The noble
" Lord had told them he would continue in his
" office out of gratitude to the people. Gra-
" titude! The noble Lord's gratitude!—O
" Sir, (ſaid Mr. Burke, addreſſing himſelf to
" the Speaker) the noble Lord's gratitude *is*
" *like that of another fallen angel like himſelf*, de-
" ſcribed by the poet:

*The debt immenſe of endleſs gratitude,*
*So burthenſome, ſtill paying, ſtill to owe.*

" So with the noble Lord; his debt immenſe " of gratitude was endleſs, and could never be " diſcharged; and therefore he had preſumed " to fly in their face, and inſult them with " ſuch language as ought to be reprobated by " every man in the houſe, who had a ſenſe of " the decency due to Parliament from the no- " ble Lord, and how ill it became him, of all " men, to ſay that he would continue in his " office out of gratitude.——The noble Lord " in the blue ribband, he ſaid, had declared, " that he would never quit his office until he " could quit it with honour: he therefore con- " gratulated the Houſe on the happy proſpect " they had of keeping the noble Lord in office; " for if he never quitted his office till *he could* " *quit it with honour*, he would be bound to ſay, " *he would retain it till the laſt hour of his life.*"

Theſe ſentences are complete in themſelves, and faithfully extracted from the debates publiſhed by Mr. Debret.——I ſhould be aſhamed to treat Mr. Burke, as he has treated Mr. Haſtings.* *I have not inſerted the beginning and the*

* See Mr. Haſtings's Defence, printed for Stockdale.

*cloſe*

*cloſe of a ſentence, omitting a material part, in order to convey a ſenſe to the reader, which the Right Honourable Speaker did not intend to convey.* But I confidently affirm, that the Engliſh language does not afford an opprobrious epithet, or a term of bitter reproach, which Mr. Burke did not apply to Lord North, when he was in oppoſition to him. I would adviſe Mr. Haſtings, therefore, not to proteſt in future againſt the treatment he has met with; for although it may be true, that " a bleſſed ſpirit of Heaven " contending with the Devil, durſt not bring " a railing accuſation againſt him," Mr. Haſtings ought to know, if he has read our Parliamentary Debates, that his accuſer has for years been accuſtomed to rail, and old habits are not eaſily conquered.

The conduct of the Rockingham party towards Mr. Haſtings is ſo peculiar, that I will venture to aſſert, it is not to be equalled in ancient or modern hiſtory. Their motives can only be known to themſelves. I ſhall ſtate facts in my future letters, and every reader will draw his own concluſions from thoſe facts.

## LETTER XI.

BEFORE I proceed to ſpecify many inſtances in which the Rockingham party has acted moſt unjuſtifiably, as well as abſurdly, towards Mr. Haſtings, I muſt remark one peculiarity which diſtinguiſhes that party from all deſcriptions of men in this kingdom, and from the national character of every other people in Europe.

The love of our country is generally and ſtrongly implanted in us.—We applaud the ſplendid ſervices of thoſe men who, from our earlieſt hiſtory to the preſent time, have been inſtrumental in defeating the ambitious deſigns of our enemies, or in extending our foreign dominion:—But it has been the * invariable practice of the Rockingham party, to diminiſh the glory which their countrymen have acquired in modern days, to under-rate their ſervices, and to ſtifle, as far as they could, every patriotic Britiſh feeling in the breaſts of

* See Parliamentary Debates, from the Commencement of the late war to this day.

the

the public.—Our foreign enemies, and our rebellious ſubjects, they have complimented, at all times, in ſtudied eulogiums.—The name of an Engliſhman, we were told, (but God forbid it ſhould be true!) was deſpiſed in foreign countries; * "Foreigners ſneered, and "turned up their noſes at an Engliſhman, but "an American was careſſed by every one." We were told by Mr. Burke, *(during Lord North's adminiſtration)* that, † "the Turk, the "ſavage Arab, the cruel Tartar, or the pirati-"cal Algerine, when compared with our "Miniſters, might be thought humane."—How was our country fallen! where was its dignity, when in the national Senate, it was aſſerted, and paſſed unnoticed, that "Mr. "Laurens had been at the head of the greateſt "commonwealth in the world?"—The law of the land at the ſame moment pronounced the Americans our revolted and rebellious colonies.—I am no advocate for the American war; but I feel like an Engliſhman for the dignity of my country.

When Lord Rodney deſtroyed the Spaniſh fleet, he deſervedly received the thanks of

* See Parliamentary Debates, February, 1782.
† *Ibid.*

both

both Houſes of Parliament; at that time he was ſuppoſed to be on bad terms with Lord Sandwich, and the Marquis of Rockingham ſhewed a laudable anxiety* "that this old friend, "Sir George Rodney, ſhould receive ſomething "more ſubſtantial than thanks":—each ſucceeding year added to his laurels; but when it was known he deteſted faction, and would ſerve his country, though Lord Sandwich, or any other man, was the naval Miniſter, he was perſecuted by the party in the Houſe of Commons, and the Marquis removed him from a ſucceſsful command, in the firſt month of his adminiſtration.—Our unfortunate Officers were received with open arms by the party, while in oppoſition, and employed by them when in office.—An American Officer, General Arnold, returned to his allegiance;—the example might have been followed;—the party, therefore, reviled him in the Senate, † and it was deemed an act of preſumption in ſo great a foe to America, while we were at war with her, to pay his duty to his Sovereign.

Engliſhmen in India ‡ have preſerved an empire to Great Britain by their intrepidity.

* See Parliamentary Debates, 1780. † Ibid. 1781.
‡ Lord Chancellor's Speech, 1783.

—In the firſt action between Sir Eyre Coote and Hyder Ally, the gallant old General tells us, that every man in his little army fought as if victory had depended on his ſingle arm, and ſo in truth it did; for he had not two thouſand Europeans, nor five thouſand ſeapoys, to engage an army of one hundred thouſand men, fluſhed with victory, and aſſiſted by a conſiderable French force.—In our war with the Marattas, we were uniformly ſucceſsful, from the month of January, 1778.

By the capture of Bednore, Tippo Sultaun was drawn from the Carnatic. And at the cloſe of the war in India, we poſſeſſed every territory that belonged to us at the commencement, and had taken every French and Dutch garriſon upon the continent of Indoſtan, excepting Cuddalore, in which Mr. Buſſy's army was beſieged, when intelligence was received of the peace in Europe.

In return for eſſential ſervices performed, the characters of our countrymen in India were baſely, and ſcandalouſly traduced. They were falſely accuſed of carrying on the war with cruelty. Many Officers of the King's army, of high rank and unblemiſhed reputation, are now in England, and can refute the calumny.

—I have

—I have made it my buſineſs to enquire moſt particularly into the truth of the aſſertions which I read in the two Annual Regiſters, (and it is well known under whoſe influence thoſe publications are) but I find that all the accounts which they have given us of the war in India, are fabulous.—For the honour of my country, I will hope that thoſe are equally ſo, which I have read, of the barbarities committed by my countrymen in America.—Inſtead of expoſing in its true colours the conduct of Suffrein,* a Knight of Malta, who ſent a number of Britiſh Officers and Soldiers to a priſon, in the country of an infidel prince, or of ſtating the more than ſavage cruelty with which they were treated,

* Suffrein himſelf was ſo ſenſible of the injury which his character had ſuſtained, by this inhuman act, and of the horror and deteſtation in which it was held by Europeans of every nation, and deſcription in Indoſtan, that in a letter which he wrote to Mr. Haſtings, he endeavoured to prove, that he was compelled by abſolute neceſſity to ſend his Engliſh Priſoners to Hyder Ally Cawn.—Lord Macartny and Sir Edward Hughes having refuſed to exchange them, and that he was unable to ſend them to the Iſlands. In the concluſion of his letter, Suffrein obſerves, that he is anxious to explain the motives of his conduct in this inſtance to a man, "of whom all the world ſpeaks well."

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the merits of our own Officers are ſunk in oblivion, their ſufferings paſſed ſilently over, and the moſt deteſtable calumnies invented, as I have been aſſured by Officers of rank, and unblemiſhed honour, in the King's and the Company's ſervice, in order to depreciate their characters in the public opinion.

I have been told that the Engliſh in India have never preſumed to interfere with the religious tenets or cuſtoms of the natives; that in their progreſs to empire they have never put an individual to death in cool blood, a circumſtance unexampled in the hiſtory of any other country; although many Engliſhmen have expoſed their own perſons during the late war, in order to reſtrain the native troops in the firſt moments of victory, and inſtead of ill-treating their priſoners, they have generally relieved them a few hours after their capture; yet the malignity of party has compared the conduct of the military ſubjects of Great-Britain in India, to the deſtructive cruelties of Cortez and Pizzaro in South America;—and one noble Lord, during the progreſs of Mr. Fox's bill, being then a Cabinet Miniſter, very charitably expreſſed a wiſh that all the Euro-

peans in India were driven into the ſea. Mr. Fox however, holds different ſentiments, and has declared that India is of the laſt importance to Great-Britain,—Lord Stormont has truly, and emphatically termed it, "the re-"maining great arm of the Britiſh Empire."

Mr. Haſtings, as I have been obliged more than once to obſerve, was effectually ſupported by the Rockingham party when Lord North was his enemy; but when the nation was ſurrounded by difficulties, and ſinking faſt under the weight of them, when vigour and abilities were neceſſary to repel the great deſigns of our European enemies upon India, Lord North wiſely determined to ſupport Mr. Haſtings.—From that moment the Rockingham party were his enemies, and proceeded to thoſe violences which I have already deſcribed.

It has lately been obſerved by a very ſenſible writer*, that the great oracle of the party, Mr. Edmund Burke, has proved too much in his ſpeech of the firſt of December 1783; for if it be true, that the miſchiefs ſuppoſed to

* The Letters of Albanicus.

have happened in India originated in a defective ſyſtem, the Company, and not Mr. Haſtings, are to blame. I will however do Mr. Burke the juſtice to ſay, that this is not exactly his argument—It will apply to all thoſe acts which preceded Mr. Haſtings's appointment to the Government of Bengal, but not to the ſubſequent period, for Mr. Burke has ſtarted an idea, which for its abſurdity, and folly, is not to be equalled in our political annals—He has ſaid † that the proprietors of Eaſt-India Stock were the ſervants of Mr. Haſtings, regularly muſtered by his agents, who were the prime ſpokeſmen in their aſſemblies—ſo that in fact Mr. Haſtings was the Eaſt-India Company.—Every man of ſenſe laughed at the idea at the time; every man of information knew that it was an admirable party ſtroke, adapted to a moment, when a meaſure of infinite conſequence to the party was agitated.—The public are now convinced, how unfounded every thing was that they heard, of the extraordinary influence of Mr. Haſtings.—Mr. Grenville laughed at ſuch an idea, when it was firſt thrown out by Mr. Fox—

* See Mr. Burke's Speech, 1ſt December, 1783.

nor will any cool and diſpaſſionate man be miſled by aſſertions, when totally unſupported by facts.—It was the pleaſure of Mr. Fox, and the motley party with which he is now connected, to attack at the ſame moment the Eaſt-India Company, Mr. Haſtings, and the Conſtitution of Great-Britain.—Was it extraordinary, that the parties ſo attacked ſhould have made the defeat of Mr. Fox's Bill a common cauſe? Did either party reſort to corruption to effect this? The appeal was fairly made to the good ſenſe of the people of England, and to that alone was the conſtitution indebted for its ſafety, the Company for its privileges, and the preſervation of a favourite, and approved ſervant.

The vengeance of the defeated party (having no other object to wreak itſelf upon, a new Parliament having ſaved Mr. Pitt from further violence, and the conſtitution from danger) has latterly purſued Mr. Haſtings——Coalition or impeachment are the objects of purſuit with them—for with the example of Lord North before their eyes, the public will treat with contempt, and deriſion, every aſſertion which may be made by the party, as

to

to the purity of their motives in the proſecution of Mr. Haſtings.

" How can we reaſon, but from what we know."

If then it be true, and no man diſputes it, that Lord North was " * to hear of his " diſgraceful and ruinous meaſures at the tri- " bunal of juſtice, and expiate them on the " public ſcaffold"—If it be true that language, the moſt opprobrious, was applied to his Lordſhip, year after year, by Mr. Fox and the party with whom he acted—If it be true that Lord North was accuſed of acting, as if he had been the † Prime Miniſter of France—If it be true that during Lord North's adminiſtration, his public conduct was a conſtant ſubject not only of abuſe but execration, at the conſtitutional ſocieties, county meetings, and Weſtminſter aſſociations, frequented by Mr. Fox and his friends.—If it be true that Mr. Fox avowed, when a miniſter, that bad as he had conceived and deſcribed the country to be, before he came into office, he found it ſtill worſe upon examination; and if it be true that Mr. Burke, in the year 1779, avowed, in his

* Mr. Fox's Speech, 1781.

† *Ibid.*

place,

place, that he would impeach Lord North, and that the articles of impeachment were in his pocket: if theſe facts are true, and if after all their profeſſions, motives of conveniency (which we know to be true) induced Mr. Fox, and Mr. Burke, to unite with Lord North inſtead of impeaching him, can we give credit to Mr. Fox, when he deſcribes Mr. Haſtings as an uſurper, whom, from his ſoul † he deteſts; or to Mr. Burke, when he declares that no conſideration upon earth, nor the deſertion of all his friends, could have induced him to coaleſce with Mr. Haſtings? ‡

By an oppoſition the moſt violent ever known, and abuſe the moſt virulent ever uttered, Lord North was forced from the helm of ſtate, but the party being too weak to ſtand without aſſiſtance, abandoned their principles, and recalled him to office. Mr. Haſtings, however, ſeems to be made of "ſterner ſtuff" than his Lordſhip; and as he never committed an act which ought to have provoked the malignity of a party, he has ſcorned to deſcend

† Mr. Fox's Speech, 1784.
‡ Mr. Burke's Speech, 1786.

to thoſe meaneſſes by which party malignity has at times been deprecated.

I am not entering further into the cauſe of Mr. Haſtings than is neceſſary, in order to expoſe the principles and conduct of the Rockingham party; and I ſhall now proceed to take a ſummary view of their late proceedings reſpecting that gentleman.

## LETTER XII.

MR. HASTINGS, in a very elegant and ſpirited performance, publiſhed a few days ago,* ſtyles himſelf, "the devoted victim "of a party, poſſeſſing the reverence of names "which ſtand too high for imputation." That gentleman has ſeen the inveteracy of the party carried to ſuch unjuſtifiable lengths, that it is probable he now holds different ſentiments. I mean in this letter to examine their late proceedings with the ſtricteſt candour, and impartiality. The public will judge by the facts that I have already laid before them, or may exhibit to their view hereafter, whether I am juſtified in aſſerting, which I do upon the fulleſt conviction, that the proſecution of Mr. Haſtings was firſt threatened with the wretched hope of obtaining ſome conceſſion advantageous to the party, and that it has been continued from motives of reſentment and revenge.

* Printed for Stockdale.

At the cloſe of the laſt ſeſſion, Major Scott obſerved*, "that Mr. Haſtings had been attacked by all parties, and by all parties in "their turn had been ſtrenuouſly defended, "juſt as the intereſts of the various parties "had changed in that houſe."—No gentleman diſputed the truth of this remark; nor can it be queſtioned—Even Mr. George Hardinge, *at a moment when the elevation of his own friends was in proſpect*, became more than eloquent in praiſe of Mr. Haſtings.—†Mr. Anſtruther, in Lord Shelburne's adminiſtration, gave him full credit for every great quality that can adorn a Stateſman; for all great qualities are included in "*undoubted* "*ability and undoubted integrity.*"—Mr. Sheridan, *who is to open the next charge*, would have held a conference with Major Scott, the avowed agent of Mr. Haſtings, had not that gentleman declined the invitation on the day Mr. Fox opened his India ſyſtem.—With a knowledge of theſe ſtriking facts, and of the ſteady ſupport which Mr. Haſtings received from

* See Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates, June 1786.

‡ See an extract from an eloquent ſpeech of Mr. Anſtruther, in favour of Mr. Haſtings, in Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates, 1786.

the Marquis of Rockingham in 1776, and from Lord North after the commencement of the war with France, I muſt fully ſubſcribe to the truth of Mr. Scott's aſſertion.

The proſecution of Sir Thomas Rumbold was once a favourite object in the late Parliament—Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke were active in it—As a matter of novelty it was tolerably well attended a week—After that time, it was with difficulty a Houſe could be formed—more than once the buſineſs was adjourned for want of attendance, though it involved in it, as we were told, "the honour of the nation, and the "happineſs of millions." The inquiry continued three years. Mr. Dundas, *juſt as the Coalition was formed*, ſeriouſly aſked if it was intended to give the buſineſs up. The Miniſter, Mr. Fox, ſtrongly objected to this, and ſaid, "that to drop the bill *would be productive of the moſt fatal conſequences.*"

The proceedings were faintly continued to the cloſe of the ſeſſion 1782-3. In the next ſeſſion, on the 19th of December, *the day after the Portland Adminiſtration was diſmiſſed*, Mr. Lee, their Attorney General, moved, that the bill ſhould be put off till the 20th of July, which was

was in fact putting it off for ever. Mr. Dundas in the laſt ſeſſion told a *curious* tale, and effectually cleared *himſelf* from any participation in the mode of throwing out the bill.

Upon Sir Thomas Rumbold it cannot reflect the ſlighteſt diſcredit; his firmneſs during a proſecution of four years, had been mentioned in terms of applauſe by all parties; his efforts had invariably been uſed, either to procure the rejection of the bill, or ſome deciſion.

But what ſhall we ſay to the Rockingham party, who have preſerved a *profound ſilence* on the ſubject, though their leader, Mr. Fox, had ſolemnly and publicly declared, that to drop the bill *would be productive of the moſt fatal conſequences?!!!* Muſt we not think that the votes of Sir Thomas Rumbold, and his friends, were of infinite importance to a ſinking party? In truth, they ſaved Mr. Fox the mortification of being left in a minority previous to the diſſolution, for his laſt angry reſolution was carried by a majority of *one.*

It was formerly the faſhion to talk of the corrupt influence of Mr. Haſtings, and the world was ſeriouſly told that his agent had

given one thouſand pounds in one year, to the editor of a ſingle paper*. If ſo, the money was miſerably laid out, for the Editor alluded to, generally devotes a column a day to the abuſe of Mr. Haſtings. The fact however was poſitively denied. Other ingenious gentlemen aſſerted, that Mr. Haſtings was a very conſiderable manufacturer of Members of Parliament. Late events have ſufficiently proved the falſehood of this aſſertion alſo. It does not appear that Mr. Haſtings has ever diſplayed the ſlighteſt deſire to attain Parliamentary influence. It was the ambition of Lord Clive, and a very groveling one, for ſo great a man, to acquire conſequence in the Houſe of Commons, from numbers. At one time, Mr. Wedderburne (now Lord Loughborough) was returned for his Shropſhire borough of Biſhop's Caſtle, and not leſs than ſix gentlemen, including his father and his brother, were brought into Parliament through his influence. Perhaps Mr. Haſtings may conceive more juſtly, that after having governed a great empire for thirteen years, and preſerved it to his country againſt a hoſt of enemies, the poſt of honour is a private ſtation.

* The Morning Herald.

Mr.

Mr. Haſtings muſt have been highly gratified by his firſt reception in England. To the unanimous thanks of his conſtituents was added the general opinion of mankind in his favour; that during a long and calamitous war the national character had been well ſuſtained in India, and the national intereſts preſerved. Men not very ſanguine in their tempers, look to our empire in the Eaſtern World, at this moment, for thoſe reſources which are to compenſate the public for its loſſes in the Weſtern.

But however ſtrong the public voice in favour of Mr. Haſtings, however high his character throughout Europe and Aſia, there was a firm and determined party in this kingdom, *once his friends*, who purſued him with all the inveteracy that diſappointed ambition could inſpire.

A great, and reſpected character in the kingdom, the Lord Chancellor, had taken a decided part in favour of Mr. Haſtings. It had been often ſaid, and was generally believed, that by the active exertions of the proprietors of Eaſt India Stock, the jealouſy and indignation,

indignation of the people were firſt excited againſt the late Miniſtry; and the proprietors were known to be the zealous friends of Mr. Haſtings, though they reprobated Mr. Burke's idea, that they were his ſervants.

The party had purſued Mr. Pitt as long as their power laſted; and Mr. Haſtings, who ſought no protection, and feared no retroſpect, became the next victim of the Coalition.—Mr. Fox once very honeſtly declared,† that he owed no favour to the Company nor Mr. Haſtings, and would ſhew them none. This was an admirable declaration for an angry politician, but unbecoming in a judge.

The inconſiſtency and injuſtice of the men who proſecute Mr. Haſtings, could not be credited, were not our Parliamentary Debates ſo accurately publiſhed. The world will read with aſtoniſhment and indignation the following facts.

In the month of June, 1785, Mr. Burke gave notice, that he would proceed againſt

† Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates, June, 1784.

Mr. Haſtings in the next ſeſſion, and when the time came, he avowed that he had been forced into the meaſure. What! the man who for years together had pledged himſelf to God and his country to prove Mr. Haſtings the greateſt delinquent in it, forced into the meaſure, becauſe he was aſked when he meant to proceed, if he did mean to proceed at all? Shall we not queſtion the conſiſtency of a man who acts in this manner? Shall we give him full credit for all he advances, as to the purity of his motives?

The mode in which the party has carried on the proſecution, is perfectly in character with their former proceedings.

The public will recollect, that it was in the month of *February*, 1783, Mr. Burke pledged himſelf to prove Mr. Haſtings a great delinquent; that Mr. Dundas was *ſolicited* to remove him for delinquency ſo early as in *May*, 1782. Yet the ſame Mr. Burke, on being refuſed ſome papers relative to a tranſaction which happened in *October*, 1783, *in India*; *declared he was left* * *with the ſhreds and frag-*

* Stockdale's Parliamentary Debates, 1786.

*ments*

*ments of charges.* I am diſguſted with the review of ſuch deſpicable abſurdities.

It would be preſumptuous in me to go deeper into the examination of a depending proſecution; but I muſt ſtate one ſhort and ſtriking fact, in order more fully to prove, that *the Rockingham party have not once been right, even by accident, in their predictions relative to India.*

The papers which Mr. Burke moved for, and the Houſe refuſed, were certain letters relative to the negociations of Major James Browne, the Engliſh Miniſter at the Court of Dehly.

From one ſentence of one letter, the party argued, that Mr. Haſtings muſt have authorized Major Browne to conclude an offenſive alliance with the Mogul. Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Fox, Lord North, and Mr. Burke, were wonderfully ingenious upon the ſubject: their ingenuity was unanſwerable; but the plain fact was ſtated by Major Scott, that Major Browne had concluded no treaty, and that Mr. Haſtings had not inveſted him with powers to conclude any; Mr. Scott

Scott added, that Major Browne, in a ſhort time, would be in England to anſwer for himſelf.

Not many weeks after the debate upon this ſubject, the Court of Directors received a letter from Major Browne, in which he ſolemnly declared, that he concluded no treaty, but had often, though ineffectually, applied to the Governor General and Council, for powers to conclude one. A few months ago Major Browne himſelf arrived in England; and his teſtimony, if he were called upon, would be an additional proof, that the *Rockingham party were not once right, even by accident, in their predictions relative to India.*

The unjuſtifiable conduct of the party towards Mr. Haſtings, cannot be an excuſe for his errors, if he has committed any: but you will recollect, that my object has not been the exculpation of Mr. Haſtings. I have written merely to expoſe the principles, and prejudices of his proſecutors. Without ſtrong proofs to the contrary, an impartial man muſt acquit Mr. Haſtings—The fact is undiſputed, that he preſerved India to Great Britain, and that all ranks

of men, Natives and Europeans, regretted very ſincerely his departure from Bengal. It will require very ſtrong evidence indeed to prove that a man ſo generally eſteemed, could have been a weak, a tyrannical, or an oppreſſive Governor.

## LETTER XIII.

IN the courſe of my correſpondence, I have endeavoured to point out the principles and practice of the Rockingham party, from the year 1766 to the preſent time. I ſhall requeſt the inſertion of this letter for the purpoſe of examining fully, and freely, an extraordinary opinion of one of the King's late Miniſters, promulgated when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and at the head of the finances of this kingdom. During the debates on Mr. Fox's India Bill, "Lord John Cavendiſh re-" minded the Houſe, that with regard to his " private opinion, he had declared it unre-" ſervedly in the laſt Seſſion of Parliament; it " remained the ſame now. He had then ſaid, " he wiſhed to God every European could be " extirpated from India, and the country re-" ſorted to merely on the principles of com-" merce—by which he meant, that the trade " between Great Britain and Indoſtan might be " carried on in like manner, as we now car-" ry on our trade with China."

I have too great an eſteem for the private character of Lord John Cavendiſh to intend the ſlighteſt diſreſpect to him when I preſume to offer a few remarks upon this ſtrange and dangerous doctrine.

Has the Legiſlature employed itſelf at any time in uſeleſs diſcuſſions as to its *right* to our late poſſeſſions in North America? Yet we well know they were obtained by fraud, rapine, and the extirpation of the natives of that extenſive country. Would to God we had been leſs anxious to acquire them, and leſs ſolicitous to retain them—We have expended above two hundred millions in the purſuit of both objects.

Has Parliament ſeriouſly conſidered how our Weſt India Iſlands were conquered? Do we not, in order to retain them, and to furniſh rum and ſugar to Great Britain, vote annually a ſum of money for the ſupport of a ſyſtem by which Africa is depopulated?

For the extenſion of trade, the increaſe of our revenues, and in order to ſupply the wants of the people of England, we colonized America, and the Weſt India Iſlands: But if we con-

 ſider

ſider our commerce with the Iſlands as a humane nation ought to do, we muſt ſhudder at it, ſince it is attended with the hourly deſtruction and miſery, of ſo many of our fellow-creatures.

Such, however, are the contradictions we run into, that the ſame men who actually encourage and ſupport the ſlave trade, are ever ready to utter a ſet of common-place phraſes relative to our empire and commerce with India, and to admit, without examination, all the falſehoods which intereſted individuals aſſert to the diſcredit of our fellow ſubjects in that quarter of the globe. One Miniſtry deſervedly fell in an attempt to turn the prejudices which they had induſtriouſly raiſed, to the purpoſes of their own ambition.

In the year 1657, Oliver Cromwell (who ſtudied the intereſt of his country) encouraged the trade of Great Britain to India. Charles the Second, and his brother James, followed the example of Oliver. In the year 1680, this trade had excited the jealouſy and uneaſineſs of many leading Members in the Houſe of Commons, and perhaps with very good reaſon.

reaſon. *A country gentleman obſerved, in that year, " that the trade to India muſt in-
" evitably ruin the kingdom—that it was car-
" ried on by the exportation of 5 and 600,000l.
" a year in ſpecie, and *that the people in India
" were ſuch ſlaves, they worked for leſs than a
" penny a day*, whereas our manufacturers re-
" quired above a ſhilling." That the Indians might not be enriched, and our own people impoveriſhed, the ſame country gentleman moved, " that the trade might be con-
" ſidered *in ſome Committee.*" This motion was highly approved. Three other gentlemen ſpoke violently againſt the trade—talked of the " *arts of the Directors*—that they gave their ſhips " *the names of Great Men*—and allowed *Great* " *Men* a ſmall ſhare of their profits—but that " the ſtock being at above 300l. per cent. few " individuals could purchaſe any of it."

A Committee was appointed—*but I have never been able to find their report*—and the trade was continued. From that time it has been a point much agitated, whether the commerce with India is or is not advantageous to England. I ſhould ſuppoſe the former, as it has

* Chandler's Debates, firſt Volume.

been

been foſtered and encouraged by ſo many ſucceſſive adminiſtrations. A Merchant of the firſt character in the City of London, (unconnected with the Company) has aſſured me that an additional ſhip fitted outf or India, is a very great advantage even to ſo flouriſhing and rich a city; nor can we doubt it, if we conſider the various Merchants and Traders who are employed in fitting an Indiaman for Sea, and completing her with the valuable cargo ſhe carries out.

But without entering further into the conſideration of the queſtion, whether the trade to India is upon the whole advantageous or not, one point, muſt be clear to every capacity, namely, that the *moſt* profitable mode of carrying it on is, by exporting as great a quantity as poſſible of our own manufactures, and to make up the difference in the value of the outward and homeward bound cargoes, (which is always conſiderable) by the produce of our Indian revenues, or where theſe are not ſufficient, by bills drawn upon Great Britain; and this is the mode by which we *now* carry on our commerce with India.

From the year 1680, when the country gentlemen complained that all our ſpecie "*would* "*be ſent to the Indies*," to 1700, very conſiderable quantities of bullion were exported to India *only*,—our China trade being then very trifling. From 1700 to 1764, the average of the annual remittances of bullion by the Eaſt India Company, was 580,000l. But from 1765 to this time (except on the firſt operation of the commutation act) the trade to India has been ſupported, 1ſt, by the ſale of exports from Great Britain; 2d, by an exceſs of our Indian revenues beyond our expenditure; and 3d, by bills drawn upon the Company, for caſh paid into their treaſuries in India, and China.

From the year 1657 to 1764 this nation was drained of immenſe ſums of money, in order to ſupport its Eaſt India commerce, probably not leſs, upon the moſt moderate computation, than thirty millions ſterling; ſtill, however, the public deemed the trade advantageous upon the whole, and continued it. But in conſequence of our acquiſition of an empire in India, that is, from the year 1764, we have not only ſaved the bullion that we had been accuſtomed to export annually from

England

England; but in addition to this, and to the great increaſe in the value of our cargoes, very conſiderable quantities of gold have been brought into Great Britain from India, not leſs perhaps than three millions ſterling;—ſo that the nation has already actually gained in circulating ſpecie, by an acquiſition which Lord John Cavendiſh lamented as a public misfortune, not leſs than ten millions ſterling.

There remains another very material point to attend to.—The average annual amount of cuſtoms paid by the Company previous to the acquiſition of our Indian empire, was 650,000l. Since that period it has increaſed to 1,300,000l. And the exports of Britiſh manufactures, in the ſame period, have increaſed to nearly double their former amount.

Is it poſſible for any gentleman to conſider this ſubject ſeriouſly, and to ſtate our acquiſitions in India as a misfortune?—Mr. Fox, when a miniſter, had a proper ſenſe of their value, and truly obſerved, that the intereſt of the proprietors, in the preſervation of India, was trifling indeed when put in competition with their importance to Great Britain.

Having done with this part of the ſubject, I have another objection to combat.—It has been ſaid by many men, for whom I entertain a great reſpect, that the ſudden influx of wealth, which followed our acquiſitions in India, has corrupted the morals of the people; and in ſo far as it has had ſuch an effect, it has been a real injury to us. I ſhould allow this aſſertion great weight, had we not a dreadful debt of 236 millions ſterling at the preſent moment.—Were we as free from incumbrances as in the days of Charles the Second, I ſhould be very ready to ſubſcribe, moſt fully, to the juſtice of the argument. But we now require an extenſive and flouriſhing commerce for the ſupport, and even for the exiſtence of public credit. Why ſhould we look invidiouſly on thoſe only who acquire wealth in India? Sir Lawrence Dundas made a larger fortune as a German contractor, than Lord Clive as a conqueror.—What India acquiſition equalled Mr. Beckford's Jamaica eſtate? Do the fortunes acquired during the late ſucceſsful war in India, bear any proportion to the ſums gained in America, or by the contracts and loans reſulting from the unfortunate American war?

They certainly do not. Do we conſider the large and rapid fortunes acquired by Lord Holland, Mr. Powell, and Mr. Calcraft, in the war before the laſt? Have they been exceeded in India?—I am ready to allow that one or two ſilly people from India have made themſelves conſpicuous, by giving into every kind of folly and diſſipation. But are there no ſilly Engliſh gentlemen who have never quitted this country? no extravagant, no oſtentatious Weſt-Indians?—Do we not know, that the transfer of property at Brookes's ſometimes exceeds, in a ſingle night, the buſineſs tranſacted in the buſieſt day at Jonathan's? Was there no gaming in St. James's-ſtreet till Great Britain had acquired an empire in India? It is both abſurd and untrue to attribute the diſſipation and extravagance of this age to the influx of wealth from the Eaſt.

In a commercial country like this, landed eſtates muſt perpetually be transferred. If the inconſiderate country gentleman is compelled by his neceſſities to diſpoſe of his acres, the ſucceſsful adventurer has an unqueſtionable right to purchaſe them.

Our Indian acquiſitions ought to be conſi-

dered in another point of view. The nation expended immenſe ſums of money in the colonization of America. Our commerce with Europe was fettered, while that with America was encouraged by bounties and drawbacks.—We raſhly involved ourſelves in two expenſive wars, and contracted a debt of two hundred millions in American ſpeculations;—and, in the end, America was ſevered from Great Britain for ever.

But what treaſures has this nation expended in attaining a rich empire in India?—None.—It was acquired by a trading company;—a circumſtance which the Earl of Upper Oſſory told us, in the Houſe of Commons, "poſ-"terity would hardly credit."—The acquiſition has been followed by a vaſt increaſe of our export trade,—by an addition of ſeven hundred thouſand pounds to our cuſtoms and exciſe annually—and an accumulation of national wealth.

*"By the unfortunate policy of Great Bri-"tain, the Company a few years ago was ſub-"jected to great expences, though ſhe ſucceeded "in preſerving India to Great Britain—Deprived

* Lord Chancellor's Speech, Dec. 8, 1783.

" of

" of the liberty of uſing her own flowing credit,
" ſhe was indebted about a million ſterling to
" Government."—The Miniſter of the day, in concert with thoſe who had laviſhed away above one hundred millions in an unſucceſsful war, had the diſhoneſty, for it deſerves no milder term, to impute to the Company, as a fault, the misfortune which his predeceſſor in office had occaſioned, and to aſk *, " If the
" ſubjects of Great Britain would conſent to
" be taxed to the laſt penny, to ſupport the
" Eaſt India Company."—We were told by a Miniſter of the ſecond rank †, " to look to our
" Sinking-fund, that pillar of credit; and to
" recollect that the diſtreſſes of the Company,
" occaſioned by miſmanagement, had already
" taken a million from that fund, by the non-
" payment of duties." A man of honour ſhould be aſhamed to miſlead the public, in a matter of ſuch importance.

Our civil rights were ſecured by the Revolution, and we are in fact the only free people in the world; but the Revolution has ſubjected

* See Parliamentary Debates, Dec. 1783.

† See Mr. Burke's Speech for December, 1783.

us to evils which were unknown to our anceſtors. We now feel the burthens which our grandfathers impoſed upon us, and our remoteſt poſterity will have cauſe to lament that we followed the pernicious policy which the Whig and Dutch miniſters of King William introduced. Heavy as our debt is, not a ſhilling of it was contracted in ſupport of the Eaſt India Company, nor of the Britiſh Empire in India. It is therefore diſhoneſt; it is ſcandalous to impute any of our diſtreſſes to miſmanagement in India.

If a man of common ſenſe were to conſider the nature of our government in the Eaſt-Indies, he muſt be convinced that our conduct there was neither arbitrary, nor oppreſſive. We muſt have been extirpated during the late war, had our government been unpopular, ſince it is a fact, that to ſecure our own provinces of Bengal, Bahar, Benares, and Orixa, and to aſſiſt our ally, the Vizier, we had not two thouſand Europeans fit for duty, nor above twenty-five thouſand Sepoys. This ſmall force protected a country above a thouſand miles in length, from four to five hundred miles in breadth, and containing about eighteen

eighteen millions of people, " famed (as Mr. " Burke ſays) for all the arts of poliſhed life, " while we were yet in the woods."—The man who can ſuppoſe for a moment, that *ſuch* a country, and *ſuch* a people could have been preſerved to Great-Britain by *ſuch* characters as Mr. Burke has deſcribed the Servants of the Company to be, *is calculated to ſubſcribe to any abſurdity that the Rockingham Party may find it convenient to circulate hereafter.*

LET-

## LETTER XIV.

THE Rockingham party are partial to reſolutions. In the month of March, 1782, Lord John Cavendiſh moved the following:

1ſt. That it appears to this Houſe that ſince the year 1775, upwards of one hundred millions of money have been expended in the army and navy in a fruitleſs war.

2dly. That it appears to this Houſe that during the above period we have loſt the Thirteen Colonies of America, which anciently did belong to the Crown of Great Britain (except the ports of New-York, Charles-Town, and Savannah), the new acquired colony of Florida, many of our valuable Weſt India and other iſlands, and thoſe few that remain are in the moſt imminent danger.

3d. That it appears to this Houſe that Great Britain is at preſent engaged in an expenſive

penſive war with France, Spain, and Holland, without a ſingle ally.

4. That it appears to this Houſe the chief cauſe of all theſe misfortunes, is owing to want of foreſight and ability in his Majeſty's Miniſters.

In the important debate upon theſe reſolutions, all ſides of the Houſe agreed that the three firſt, unfortunately for the nation, were truiſms. A difference of opinion did indeed exiſt as to the laſt, and Lord North was ſaved from its appearing againſt him on the Journals by a majority of ten. Had I been a member, I ſhould have voted with Lord North, becauſe I believe in my conſcience, that the calamities and misfortunes of the laſt war were occaſioned more by the intemperate violence of Oppoſition, than by the want of foreſight and ability in the King's Miniſters. It is peculiar, that in enumerating our misfortunes, Lord John had no loſſes in India to detail.

As this letter will cloſe my correſpondence, I ſhall borrow a hint from Lord John Cavendiſh, and finiſh it by the inſertion of a few truiſms in the form of reſolutions—

1. That by the creed of the Rockingham party, the nation can never be ſo happy as under a " Government of Connection."

2. That the leaders of the connection were the *Cavendiſhes, Fitzwilliams, Rockinghams, Bentinks, and Keppels.

3. That to theſe may now be added the Norths, Murrays, Wedderburnes, Ruſſels, and Howards.

4. That in order to fix the government of connection, the Rockingham party ſyſtematically oppoſed the King's Miniſters, from June 1766, to March 1782.

5. That within this period Great Britain loſt her ancient dominions in America, many of her iſlands, and contracted a debt of above one hundred millions ſterling.

6. That at one time the party attributed our misfortunes to the ignorance and imbecility, and at another to the treachery, of the King's Miniſters, but that Lord North and his

* See Mr. Burke's Letter to the citizens of Briſtol.

friends

friends imputed them to the factious oppoſition which obſtructed every meaſure of Government, and to the encouragement given by the members of Oppoſition, to the leaders of the Rebellion.

7. That in February 1782, the party gained over many of Lord North's friends, by an aſſertion, that they could make peace with America.

8 That in the ſame month Mr. Fox offered to negociate that peace *for* Lord North, but deſired to be underſtood that he meant to have no connection *with* him; declaring "that "from the moment he made terms with any "one of them, he would reſt ſatisfied to be "called the moſt infamous of mankind."

9. That in the month of February, 1782, Lord North was in a minority, in a queſtion on the American war; that in the following month, he was ſaved from a perſonal cenſure by a majority of ten only; and on the 23d of March, when a ſimilar queſtion was to have been moved by Lord Surry, he declared that his Majeſty's Miniſters were no more.

10. That by the reſignation of Lord North and his friends, a complete change took place—The Rockingham party came in upon their own terms—received carte blanche from the King—and poſſeſſed the confidence of the Parliament, and the people.

11. That they failed in their promiſe of concluding a peace with America—that they humbled the kingdom at the feet of Holland, who declined our offers of peace, nor would they grant us a truce.

12. That the King's Miniſters deſcribed the ſtate of this country, *when at war with all the world*, to be infinitely worſe than they had conceived it to be before they came into office, and they publicly declared, after their negociations for peace had commenced, that no peace could be a bad one for this country.

13. That the Reform Bill of Mr. Burke was eſſentially different when carried into a law, from the bill which he brought in when the party was in oppoſition, and that it has not ſaved thirty thouſand pounds a year.

14. That they recalled Lord Rodney in the moment of victory.

15. That they preſſed the recall of Mr. Haſtings from Bengal, at the moſt critical period of the late war—that they were prevented from carrying ſo pernicious a meaſure into effect, by the ſpirited and legal interference of the Proprietors of Eaſt India ſtock.

16. That Mr. Burke has called this legal interference, in a ſpeech printed by himſelf, "an Act of Audacity."

17. That ſo far from the Rockingham party forming that firm, and decided Miniſtry which the nation looked for, the Cabinet was torn to pieces by diſſentions, until by the death of the Marquis of Rockingham on the 1ſt of July, 1782, his ſhort, and inefficient adminiſtration was diſſolved.

18. That upon the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, Lord John Cavendiſh, Mr. Fox, and many of the party reſigned, aſſigning as a reaſon for their reſignation, that Lord Shelburne would not acknowledge the independence of America unconditionally.

19. That

19. That later events have proved moſt fully, that the Americans were perfectly indifferent as to this point, and that no one good conſequence could have reſulted from an unconditional declaration of independence.

20. That the party became as violent againſt Lord Shelburne as they had hitherto been againſt Lord North; that they aſſerted Lord Shelburne would bring in the old Miniſter, Lord North; but that the nation would not bear it.

21. That in the beginning of the next year, 1783, the party were determined to try what the nation *would* bear; and they formed a coalition with Lord North.

22. That by this extraordinary coalition, they ſtrengthened the government of connection, though they forfeited the confidence of the people.

23. That it was untrue to aſſert, that the American war being at an end, the cauſe of their difference was removed; ſince in fact the Rockingham party oppoſed every other meaſure propoſed by Lord North, with as much violence as they had done the American war.

24. That

24. That the Coalition Miniſtry was a Miniſtry of connection and influence, formed againſt the ſenſe of the ſovereign, (who ſtood a ſiege of ſix weeks before he yielded) and the people, who reprobated that Adminiſtration from the day it was formed to the hour it was diſmiſſed,

25. That with a view of fixing their adminiſtration, Mr. Fox brought in his India bill, which had for its object the poſſeſſion of all the power, and all the patronage of the Eaſt India Company, at home and abroad.

26. That neceſſity was the ground alledged in ſupport of the bill at one time, and *that* neceſſity was ſtated to have ariſen from the diſtreſſes of the Company, brought upon them by the miſmanagement of Mr. Haſtings—That, at another time, it was aſſerted, that the Company's ſervants grievouſly oppreſſed thirty millions of people in India.

27. That this laſt aſſertion, though directly in the face of truth and common ſenſe, was taken as matter of fact, without any attempt to examine how far it was founded,

that

that the Attorney General aſſuming it as a truth, aſked what was a charter but a piece of parchment, with a ſeal dangling at the end of it, compared with the happineſs of thirty millions of people; that by ſuch a mode of begging the queſtion, every eſtabliſhment in Great Britain might be overturned.

28. That in India every thing had been ſaved at a very trifling expence;—that in America every thing had been loſt, at an expence which has doubled the national debt.

29. That the contradictions and abſurdities of thoſe miniſters who ſupported the India bill, were too glaring not to ſtrike every man of common obſervation.

30. That Mr. Burke, who is ſuppoſed to have puſhed the party on to ſo violent a meaſure, made a long ſpeech in ſupport of the bill on the 1ſt of December, 1783, and in the following month he himſelf printed and publiſhed that ſpeech.

31. That after ſtating as facts certain wild ideas of his own, he imputes in one part of his ſpeech all that he ſtated as wrong, to Mr. Haſtings.

Haſtings. In another part he talks of the audacity of the Court of Proprietors. In another part he deſcribes them not as a great, independent body of people, but as the ſervants of the ſervants of the Company; and towards the cloſe of his ſpeech, he unſays all he has been aſſerting, relative to Mr. Haſtings, in the following remarkable words: "That the evils "in India have ſolely ariſen from the Court "of Proprietors, is groſsly falſe. In many of "them the Directors were heartily *concurring*, "in moſt of them they were *encouraging*, in all "they were *conniving*."

32. That palpable as theſe abſurdities appeared, and falſe as we *now* know all the aſſertions of the party, relative to the ſtate of India *then* to have been, the Bill paſſed through the late Houſe of Commons.

33. That in the Houſe of Peers, Lord Thurlow took up the oppoſition to the Bill on a ground perfectly new, and unexpected by the party.

34. That he ſtrenuouſly ſupported Mr. Haſtings, avowing in the moſt direct and explicit terms an important truth, that Mr.

Haſtings had preſerved an empire to Gr eat Britain.

35. That he challenged the ſupporters of the Bill to prove a neceſſity for ſuch a meaſure, either from any thing that had happened, or was likely to happen in India.

36. That the party at firſt declared Mr. Haſtings's merits or demerits had nothing to do with the Bill, but they were afterwards compelled to aſſign the beſt reaſons they could in its ſupport, that an Enſign of ſix months ſtanding in Bengal would have bluſhed to betray ſuch ignorance of India, as thoſe noble Lords diſplayed who were to have governed it if the Bill had paſſed into a law.

37. That Lord Thurlow ſtrenuouſly and eloquently defended Mr. Haſtings. Lord Walſingham entered into a minute detail of the principal meaſures of his long adminiſtration: and Lord Camden declared, " *he was* " *the life and ſoul of our ſucceſs in India.*"

38. That it can now be aſſerted, and cannot be contradicted, that the Rockingham

party were not right, even by accident, in a ſingle prediction which they hazarded during the diſcuſſion of the India Bill in either Houſe of Parliament.

39. That the Bill, profeſſedly founded on Mr. Haſtings's miſmanagement, was thrown out, and the Coalition Adminiſtration diſmiſſed.

40. That in the firſt ebullitions of their anger, Mr. Haſtings and India were totally neglected, and Earl Temple and Mr. Pitt were the objects of the party's attack.

41. That their fears for India again returned; that they aſſerted India would be ruined, or loſt, if their Bill, or one ſimilar to it, was not inſtantly paſſed.

42. That in this, as in every other aſſertion, they were miſtaken—No Bill of any kind paſſed for many months, and India is neither ruined nor loſt.

45. That by the diſſolution of Parliament, Mr. Pitt and the Proprietors of the Eaſt India Company (who had both been as virulently

abuſed as Mr. Haſtings) were ſecured, Mr. Pitt againſt further angry reſolutions, and the Proprietors in poſſeſſion of their rights.

44. That Mr. Haſtings became the only remaining object on which the party could exerciſe its vengeance.

45. That Mr. Haſtings had been ſtrenuouſly, and ſucceſsfully ſupported by the Rockingham party, in 1776, when Lord North wiſhed to remove him.

46. That in 1782, when India was convulſed to the centre, and Great Britain ſurrounded by enemies, the Rockingham party would have removed Mr. Haſtings, but were prevented by the Court of Proprietors.

47. That in the following year the Friends of Mr. Haſtings uſed every means in their power (except by corruption, of which they were falſely accuſed) to oppoſe Mr. Fox's India bill; that the agent of Mr. Haſtings declined to meet Mr. Sheridan on the day Mr. Fox opened his ſyſtem; and that he never ſought, directly or indirectly, to deprecate the reſentment

reſentment which the party had ſo unjuſtly conceived againſt Mr. Haſtings.

48. That Mr. Sheridan, *who is to open the next charge*, fairly confeſſed that if he and Major Scott had met on the day Mr. Fox brought in his Bill, it might have led to ſome accommodation. That where the party cannot coaleſce, they will impeach.

49. That Mr. Haſtings having reſtored peace and tranquillity to India, voluntarily reſigned his government ſeventeen days before a ſucceſſor was appointed to it by his conſtituents in England.

50. That he received the unanimous thanks of the Directors on his arrival, for his important, faithful, and ſucceſsful ſervices.

51. That Mr. Burke gave notice, a few days after his arrival, that he meant to proceed againſt him the next ſeſſion.

52. That in the next ſeſſion he affirmed he had been forced into the meaſure, though he had voluntarily and ſolemnly pledged himſelf, in the year 1783, to prove Mr. Haſtings a delinquent.

53. That

53. That Mr. Burke had aſſured the late Houſe of Commons that he would lay ſuch ſcenes before them as ſhould freeze their ſouls with horror; but upon being refuſed ſome papers which referred to matters *ſubſequent to the period* in which he made this extraordinary aſſertion, Mr. Burke declared—*he was left with the ſhreds and fragments of charges.*

And here, I cloſe my reſolutions, appealing to the good ſenſe of my countrymen to determine whether they are not, in the fulleſt ſenſe of the word, *as perfect truiſms*, as thoſe which Lord John Cavendiſh moved in the year 1782, with a view *of following them by a vote of cenſure upon Lord North and the Cabinet Miniſters of that day.*

*London*,
Nov. 5, 1786. AN ENGLISHMAN.

---

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Shaw

Shaw Aulumgeer, who is better known in Europe by the name of Aurengzebe, obeyed the call of nature. Azim Shaw, his ſecond ſon, uſurped the throne, and after a ſhort reign, was ſlain in battle by his elder brother Shaw Alum; who in the year 1712, died of poiſon. His ſon, Jehaunder Shaw, obtained the empire by the ſword, and by the deciſion of the ſame power forfeited it, with his life, at the end of nine months, to his nephew Ferokſere, ſon to Azeem Ooſhawn, who was the ſecond ſon to Shaw Aulum; and with this important event, which ſettled the throne of Hindoſtan in peace, till the incurſion of Kouli Khan, this intereſting morſel of hiſtory concludes.

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affirmed, that, in the higheſt ranks and departments in the ſtate, we have not, at the preſent moment, to boaſt of ſuch a compaſs of ability and learning as diſtinguiſhed and adorned the court of James I. Very few of our nobility, ſcarcely one indeed, is diſtinguiſhed by ſuperior genius in philoſophy, or attainments in literature; and, for the public offices, moderate abilities, with experience and political intereſt, are ſufficient to raiſe the favourite of fortune to the very higheſt of them. The venerable judge, who now fills the high office of lord chief juſtice of England, will bear to be compared even with Coke; but where, among all our ſtateſmen and philoſophers of high rank, is there to be found a Northampton or a Saliſbury, a Napier or a Verulam? In the period alluded to, men were exceedingly learned; and they made their learning to bear, in too great profuſion perhaps, upon all ſubjects that came under the conſideration of the legiſlature, or the cognizance of government. Their pedantry may now appear ridiculous; but the general maxims of juriſprudence and civil policy, which they derived from ſyſtematic reading, on the ſubjects that concern the ſtate, and on all ſubjects in literature and ſcience, which all, as Cicero obſerves, run into one another; the general maxims which they derived from ſo extenſive a ſphere of contemplation enabled them, on ſome important occaſions, to control the natural fluctuation and inſtability of men's minds, and to perform the greateſt ſervices to the public. Nor ought we to exclude, from the number of the accompliſhed great, the king himſelf, who, with profound learning, was not deſtitute of political wiſdom; and who poſſeſſed a faculty of diſtinguiſhing, and a diſpoſition to reward, literary merit.

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*See Engliſh Review, October*, 1786.

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